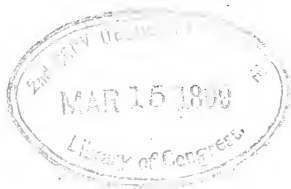
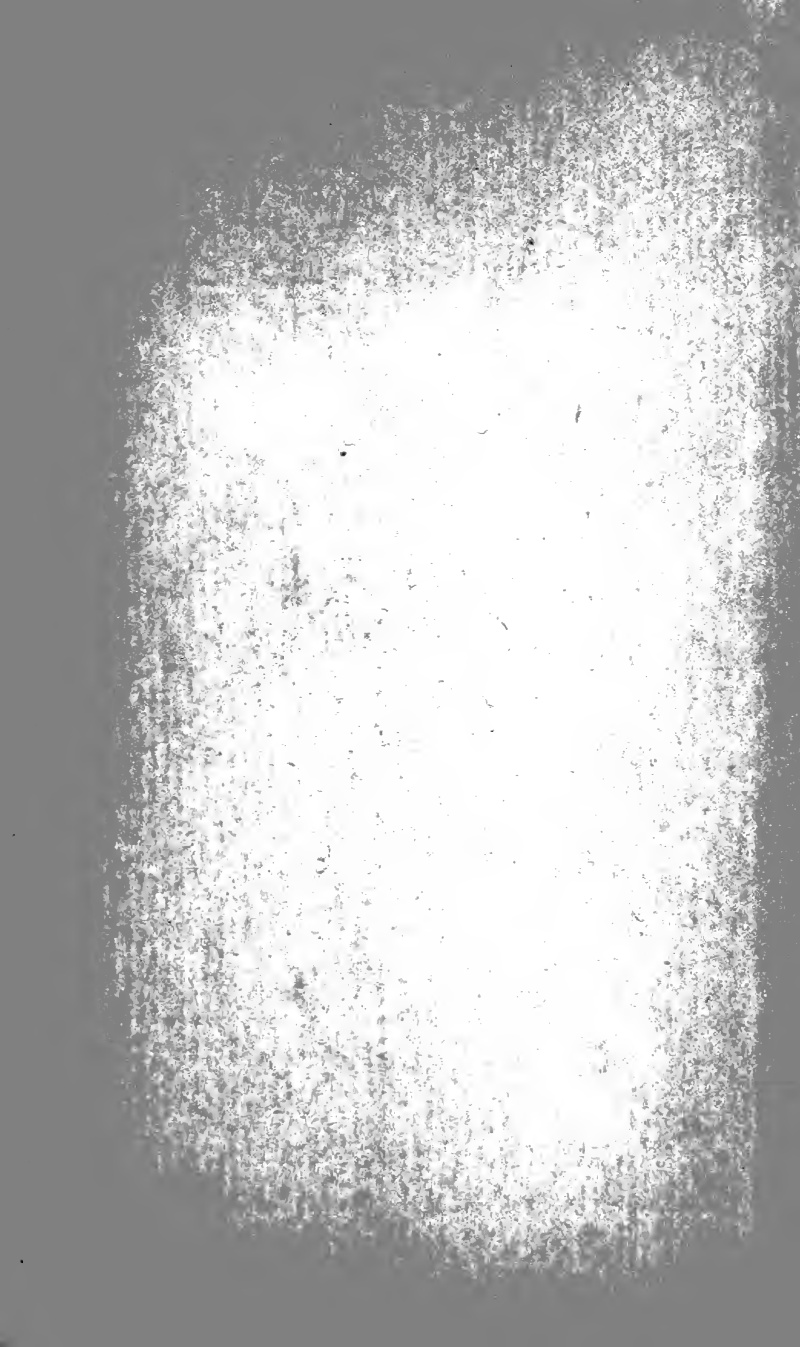




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FOR SHINE AND SHADE



For  
Shine and Shade

SHORT ESSAYS IN PRACTICAL RELIGION

BY  
WAYLAND HOYT, D. D.

AUTHOR OF

*"Gleams from Paul's Prison," "Brooks in the Way,"*  
*"Along the Pilgrimage," "Saturday*  
*Afternoons," etc.*



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Then the cloud-rift broadens, spanning earth  
that's under,  
Wide our world displays its worth, man's  
strife and strife's success;  
All the good and beauty, wonder crowning  
wonder,  
Till my heart and soul applaud perfection,  
nothing less.

—*Robert Browning*



*I desire to express my thanks to the Editors of the "Standard," "Christian Work," "Independent," "Sunday School Times," "Watchman," "Congregationalist," "Examiner," and "Christian Endeavor World," for permission to use matter which has appeared in their columns.*





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# FOR SHINE AND SHADE

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## I

### THE BEST

**D**ID you ever wait to learn the lesson the Magi teach us in their gifts to the infant Jesus? They laid at his feet not anything unworthy, not that which cost them little in the getting, nor just the common things they could pick up easily and anywhere ; but they brought for presentation to him the best and costliest their toil and love could win—gold, frankincense, myrrh. They did their best. They gave their best.

Much, in various ways, this fact that the Magi brought their best has taught me. May I suggest to you some of the teachings I have learned?

For one thing, I have learned that there ought to flash and flame before us the best ideal. It was because the Magi thought so loftily that they did so highly. That is a very real and even rugged rule for life, that no one

can do better or nobler than he thinks. He may do worse ; he cannot do better. The sculptor Powers used to tell how, even sometimes in his waking hours and often in his dreams, he was wont to seem to see, beyond the river flowing by his father's Vermont farmhouse, a beautiful, fascinating, beckoning white image. It became the passion of his life to capture that fair image and make it actual in marble. It was because he had such a lofty ideal that he wrought so nobly in the realm of sculpture, giving added radiance to American art.

But it is not necessary that one be an artist to cherish the best ideal. Every one ought to cherish the best ideal in whatever department of life he may stand and work. There is a best even amid that which men call lowliest. I have read of one who determined to be the best bootblack in London. You see he had, and he had rightly, the best ideal of even so inconspicuous a function as his. How that ideal glorified his menial toil !

Some people say they will have the best ideal when they get out of their present circumstances and can get their hand on more stately office. But that looking far from the present, and easy imagining of how they will do in other circumstances, is the quickest way

to shut against themselves the doors of higher and larger chance. You find gold in gravel. Be determined to see high possibilities even amid the common stones of the most everyday work and circumstance, and you will be likely to do your common work so well that you soon will be wanted for work and place less common. Have high thoughts of things. Think gold and nothing less. It was the best ideal the Magi had that made them bring their best.

Another lesson these Magi, making presentation of their best, have taught me is that, thinking the best, they actually did the best. They did not think gold and become content to bring copper or even silver. They actually wrought up to their best ideal. I have got much help and impulse for myself here. Of course I do not pretend to say that I have steadily practised the lesson I have learned. But learning the lesson has certainly moved me to try more thoroughly.

You see, there are so many people content simply with the best ideal. It is very beautiful and entrancing as it gleams before them in their mind's eye. But the trouble is, while they think gold they do not care to try to do gold. They are unwilling to struggle toward making their ideal best an actual best. They

are not stirred into resolute attempt toward their ideal.

Ah, how true this is, in the study, in the house, in the store or workshop, in the church, the thinking high is good, but the doing high is laggard, slow, mean. I have got very much help and impulse for myself from the vision of these Magi, who not only thought gold, but did gold; who had a high ideal, and then, though it took a six months' journey across the desert sands to do it, actually did the lofty thing they thought. They shame me, these Magi, when I find myself slipping back into somnolent content with shabby work.

Let us remember, for our comfort, that, even though the best we can bring seems to us poor lead or rusty iron, if it be really our best, the issue of genuine desire and prayer and attempt, our Lord's gracious love will surely transmute our poor best to such gold as in heaven passes current.

## II

### ACCORDING TO ABILITY

“**A**CCORDING to his several ability”—it is thus our Lord announces and distributes responsibilities. The main question is not as to amount of ability—whether five

talents or two or one ; the question is as to the use of it. And according to one's use is the giving or the withholding of the divine commendation. Let me illustrate.

One writes somewhat in this way of one of the outstanding men who adorned a large portion of the preceding century and the earlier years of our own :

“In a region unseen by the world, in the stillness of the closet on his knees before God, he laments for secret sins, pleads for holiness in his inner life, searches his heart with the word of God as with a lighted candle. He then goes into Parliament and the world. By the gleam of the gold men see that it has been purified by celestial fire. He touches every question by the Ithuriel spear of Christian truth. When the shifting meteor of expediency offers itself for the pole-star of duty men turn to him : ‘Look on this,’ they say, ‘with your eye ; we believe it has been purified with light divine.’ ”

This man was born into an even princely place. Wealth was his by birthright. He had never need to know the tasking struggle for daily bread ; he had never need to force himself into social position more lofty than his own. Every opulent comfort, every chance the selectest social advantage could proffer,

came trooping to his hand. Of course no ministry of the best possible education was denied him. In addition, he was endowed with an intellect of peculiar brightness, clearness, wit, force. When he was in Parliament Edmund Burke sat there, and Richard Brinsley Sheridan, and James Fox, and William Pitt ; and yet, though of different sort, so large and bright was this man's intellect that, notwithstanding defect of piping voice and insignificant personal presence, he easily held his place as peer with men like these. Dr. Johnson's Boswell heard him speak once at York. "I saw what seemed a mere shrimp mount upon the table," he wrote ; "but as I listened he grew and grew until the shrimp became a whale."

Never gloomy, never morose, never morbid, enjoying to the full the bright things God had put within his so easy grasp, always the life, fascination, magnetic center of every social circle, this man yet, for conscience' sake and God's, devoted himself to the most tasking and unpopular service for the good of his fellow-men. For nineteen years he fought, with but few helpers, that tough, tenacious battle for the abolition of slavery in the dominions of Great Britain. He set his pen in motion also. He wrote what, in his day, was a



very renowned book, "The Practical View of Christianity." It was translated into many languages. Edmund Burke spent the largest share of the last two days of his life in reading it, steadying his great soul with the comfort he got from it. Away up in a Scottish parish a young minister perused its pages in the solitude of a sick chamber, and the mighty and masterful evangelical ministry of Thomas Chalmers was the issue. But not to wait to mention other services various and great to which this man set his hand, as one tells us :

"The concluding years of his life were calm and beautiful. He spent them at his country residence of Highwood. More and more his eye turned toward the home he was now nearing. Through his vivacity, through his still fresh activity, there shone more and more the mellowing light of holiness. He loved to expatiate under the open sky, to watch the dew-drops, to gaze long and with unsated delight upon flowers. 'Surely,' he would say, 'flowers are the smiles of God's goodness.' "

And so, in 1832, William Wilberforce passed tranquilly to his rest and reward. He had been true to his trust of ability. He had put his talents to the usurers and they had greatened grandly for his Lord.

Turn now from the shining world of wealth

and Parliament and high society. Contemporary with William Wilberforce there is a man living at Portsmouth, England. As different as possible is his environment. He was the son of a poor artisan in the royal dockyards. As soon as the boy's hands could be set at anything they were set at such toil as his father wrought at. After working thus for fifteen years he fell one day, was permanently lamed, could be artisan no more in royal dockyards.

Fortunately his hands were still free and strong. Yes ; he would rest his lameness on the bench of the shoemaker and use his hands in cobbling shoes. Thenceforward, through his whole life, that was his duty. He was, and was always, nothing more than a mender of old shoes. He did not even rise to be a maker of new shoes. Evidently his talent for his craft was not surprising. Well, he was a kindly soul, and he must have some objects to which he could give his love. So his heart went out toward animals, and somehow he compelled those of diverse natures into harmony. You might have seen him plying his cobbler's tools with a cat perched on one shoulder and a canary bird warbling on the other.

But he found he needed better objects of affection. He had a nephew, one of the children of poverty, and lamed as he was. He

took him in. He undertook to bring him up. He made for him a very ingenious apparatus, of wood and leather which helped much the little fellow's lameness, and then he began to teach him regularly the little he knew himself. Then the thought struck him, Why could he not teach two children as well as one ; why not three, four, five, six, and so on, of the children who could get no better schooling than the streets? The son of a poor woman who sold sweetmeats was his second pupil ; soon he got in others, the worst children of a bad neighborhood. Finally he had a class of something like forty, girls on one side, boys on the other, of his cobbler's bench. His little room could hold no more. Then, as he hammered and stitched at his worn shoes, he taught his children.

He was too poor to buy books for them ; they were too poor to buy books for themselves. Torn fragments of handbills for teaching letters, a few slates for teaching writing and figuring—such apparatus was the best he could muster. But he was quite inventive and even philosophical in his way of teaching. He would gently strike a child on the hand. "What is this?" he would ask the child. "My hand," the child would say. "Spell it," he would require, and so, making lesson books of familiar

things, the child would get on. Also, he taught his children how to cook, to mend their shoes, etc. ; was careful of their health too, had all sorts of remedies for cuts, scalds, bruises, chilblains ; saw that his children should have good playtimes also, making for them balls, bows, arrows, various playthings, with his own hands. Nor did he forget the children's moral natures ; he taught them of God and Christ, and the beauty and nobleness of goodness and the ugliness and meanness of vice.

So the years went on, and many a class of street arabs graduated from this academy of the cobbler's stall. Meantime he kept the wolf from the door by steadily cobbling shoes.

Well, he had grown to be sixty-two years old, and there was only one fear that troubled him, that old age and sickness resulting from his lameness should so damage his faculties that he would become incapable of continuing his work. He had no other fear. "How I wish you were rich," a lady said to him one day. "I don't know, ma'am," he answered ; "but this I do know, there can't be in all England a happier man than I ; and I am sure everything is for the best."

On the Christmas Eve of the year 1838, with that one fear shadowing him, he said to some one : "I have but one wish now, that when I

grow too old to maintain myself and to work at my school, I may die suddenly, just as a bird drops off its perch." Well, on the New Year's Day of 1839, this cobbler was at the house of a gentleman, talking about his school, and was holding in his hand one of his pupil's slates which he was showing. Like a lightning flash, smitten with apoplexy, he fell dead on the floor. So he was delivered from his one fear. There in his cobbler shop the little school children were waiting for the return of their beloved friend and master. He came back, but only as he was carried back. Ah, the sobs that resounded in the cobbler's shop that day! They say that for many days afterward groups of his scholars were still wandering up and down in front of his house; they could not believe that the door would open to them no more, that they would never again see their friend waiting for them with his smiling face at that threshold. But the seed this cobbler planted did not die, if he must. The great and glorious growth of charitable schools for outcast children in Great Britain springs from the seed he planted in his cobbler's shop in the poor and narrow street. It was John Pounds, the crippled cobbler of Portsmouth, England, who planted the seed.

To every man according to his several ability.

John Pounds too, put his talents to the usurers, and what wealthy return came of them for the glory of his Lord ! This is the lesson for us ; whether low or high, whether in ampler place or narrower, we are to use the ability we have. Usurers of opportunity are on every side of every one of us. The work of John Pounds was as needful as the work of William Wilberforce. Chance and ability are not the main question ; that we serve where and how we can is the main question. And whatever our chance and place may be, if we but serve, there shall come the equal commendation from the just and loving and regarding Lord, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

### III

#### A BAD WAY OF BEGINNING SUNDAY

A BAD way of beginning Sunday is to begin it with the Sunday newspaper. And it is a fact, very sad and even ominous, that too many, even Christian people, do begin their Sundays in this bad way.

Let us think of it a moment ; and I write especially for Christian people.

The spiritual life needs nurture. We are commanded to grow in grace. A thing grows

as it lays hold of the sustenance appropriate to it. You cannot raise flowers in a snowbank; you cannot get vigorous physical life out of food missing the elements which go to make up bone and nerve and muscle. I read once of some European explorers in Australia who, failing in provision, were obliged to partake of a certain vegetable growing in Australia which seemed to satisfy hunger, but which, lacking altogether the elements of proper food for a European, brought the death of starvation, even though the stomach seemed surfeited.

I think the Sunday secular newspaper, as far as nutriment for the spiritual life is concerned, is pretty accurately represented by that deceiving Australian plant. What does the Sunday newspaper bring for the help and sustenance of the spiritual life, with its too frequent record of spicy social scandals, sensational stories, and simply worldly news? In this worldly world it is hard enough anyway to produce the unworldly life, and Sunday is the day set apart for the nurture of the spiritual life. Surely the man who in the least values the advance of the spiritual life gives a most poor aid to it when the first thing on Sunday morning he devours the utterly secular columns of a secular Sunday newspaper. It is by no means a good preparation for the praise and worship and re-

ligious instruction of the public sanctuary. Surely the Sunday secular newspaper is a somewhat hindering vestibule for the religious work and worship of the Lord's Day.

Besides, think of the armies of newsboys the sale of the Sunday secular papers sets at work every Sunday morning. Has your heart never been pained as you have heard their cries resounding through the Sunday quiet? They are not simply selling their newspapers, these boys; they are being educated into an utter disregard of the sanctity of the Lord's Day. There are thousands and thousands of them thus set at work through all our cities by the Sunday secular newspaper. What sort of a moral crop are the future generations going to gather from such persistent education in a disregard of Sunday? I think every Christian man, every citizen who has the best weal of the community at heart, must fear somewhat as he thinks of a generation growing up so steadily educated in a wild disregard of the claims of God upon his day. And every Christian man who buys or takes a Sunday secular newspaper is himself an intimate and vital sharer in the anti-Sunday education of this vast army of newsboys.

Think too of the effect of the coming of a Sunday secular newspaper, Sunday after Sun-



day, upon the children of a Christian household. If the children of that household are at all taught in Christian ways, they are taught that the Sunday is the day of God, is to be recognized as God's day, is specially set apart for him, is to be used for him. But the blatant secular Sunday newspaper is the first thing that greets their young eyes on the Sunday morning. And their young eyes see too, the Christian father and mother greedily devouring it. The thought of God is not the first thing; the thought of the world is the first thing. How steadily the practice of such a Sunday newspaper reading by the Christian father and mother clashes with their teaching of the sanctity of the Lord's Day ! What wonder if these children of a Christian household even, grow up into the notion that the Sunday is in no real sense a day for God, but is only a day for self ; grow up into the notion that God has no special claim on any of their time anyway ; become out and out secularists ! However you look at it there is tremendous moral damage to a Christian home by the persistent and irreverent intrusion of the Sunday newspaper. Its presence is a sad blight for the children.

Besides, the Sunday secular newspaper is the perpetual educator toward a disregard of

law. Why may not the merchant who takes and reads the Sunday newspaper as well sell his wares on Sunday as the editor of a Sunday newspaper may sell his? But the laws command a cessation of unnecessary toil on Sunday. Why is the editor of a Sunday newspaper released from the obligation of good citizenship to obey those laws? With what consistency and conscience can he insist on obedience to law in the columns of his newspaper when every week he is the flagrant violator of law? And the Christian man who takes and reads the Sunday newspaper is the necessary abettor of such disregard of law. Steadily he helps it on.

But the foundation principle of our republic is the sacred regard for law on the part of all good citizens. And there is no influence setting itself more constantly at the undermining of such regard for law than the Sunday secular press which violates law with such high hand. It is a bad thing for any man to have a hand in the education of the community toward the disregard of law; it is especially bad for a Christian man to lend his hand thus. But every habitual taker and reader of the Sunday secular newspaper is doing his certain and personal share toward such damaging and unpatriotic moral education.

Any way you look at it, this beginning the Sunday with the secular newspaper is bad. If only the Christian men in a community, the decent and controlling men, would refuse to either buy or advertise in the Sunday secular newspaper, this tremendous and unmoral influence would cease. That they all do it, or that so many do it, is no excuse. Keep your skirts clear. Do not you do it. So, anyway, your influence will be on the better side.

#### IV

### THE HELP-BRINGER

SUCH was Onesiphorus. You will remember how St. Paul makes reference to him in his second letter to Timothy : "The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus ; for he oft refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chain ; but, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently and found me."

And that is the precise meaning of the name Onesiphorus—Help-Bringer. Beautiful name, is it not ? And Onesiphorus was true to his name. He was not only called Help-Bringer, he was Help-Bringer. And that is more beautiful.

Read again that famous extract from the

annals of the Roman historian Tacitus : “ But neither these religious ceremonies nor the liberal donations of the prince could efface from the minds of men the prevailing opinion that Rome was set on fire by his own—Nero’s—orders. The infamy of that horrible transaction still adhered to him. In order, if possible, to remove this imputation he determined to transfer the guilt to others. For this purpose he punished, with exquisite torture, a race of men detested for their evil practices, by vulgar appellation commonly called Christians. The name was derived from Christ, who, in the time of Tiberius, suffered under Pontius Pilate, the procurator of Judea. By that event the sect of which he was Founder received a blow which, for a time, checked the growth of a dangerous superstition ; but it revived soon after and spread with recruited vigor, not only in Judea, the soil which gave it birth, but even in the city of Rome, the common sink into which every thing infamous and abominable flows like a torrent from all quarters of the world. Nero proceeded with his usual artifice. He found a set of abandoned and profligate wretches who were induced to confess themselves guilty, and on the evidence of such men a number of Christians were convicted, not on the clear evidence of

their having set the city on fire, but rather on account of their sullen hatred of the whole Roman race. They were put to death with exquisite cruelty, and to their sufferings Nero added mockery and derision. Some were covered with the skins of beasts and left to be devoured by dogs; others were nailed to the cross; numbers were burnt alive, and many, covered over with inflammable matter, were lighted up when the day declined to serve as torches during the night. For the convenience of seeing this tragic spectacle the emperor lent his own gardens. He added the sports of the circus and assisted in person, sometimes driving a curricule and occasionally mixing with the rabble in his coachman's dress." Thomas Carlyle speaks of this passage from Tacitus as the most somber and portentous piece of writing he knows of in literature.

You see, Nero wanted to build for himself a vast palace, which he subsequently did build and called the Golden House. And in order to make room for it there in the neighborhood of the Palatine and the Esquiline Hills, the most thickly populated portion of the great metropolis, he, in an insanity of cruelty and wickedness, set fire to the city. The fire raged for several days and nights and multitudes were killed and rendered homeless. So tremendous

was the smiting against him, however, of an exasperated public opinion that even Nero quailed. So he sought to divert suspicion from himself by the scattering of large donatives, by various religious ceremonies, and by insinuating that the blame of the fire did not rest upon himself, but upon the Christians.

Thus began to ravage the first and awful persecution of the Christians, the terrific method of which Tacitus has just been telling us.

The Apostle Paul, some two or three years back, had been released from his first imprisonment at Rome, because on trial it had been found impossible to substantiate the charges of sedition, etc., laid against him.

That first imprisonment had been a kind of honorable captivity. He had lived in his own hired apartments, and though he was held by a coupling chain to a guardian soldier, his friends had free access to him, and in many ways the hardneses of his captivity had been cushioned.

A free man once more and going forth on various missionary journeys, perhaps as far west as Spain, he has returned and is at Troas possibly.

But this first great persecution of the Christians is flaming everywhere ; of course the apostle is known everywhere as the foremost

Christian. So now he is seized, doubtless by Nero's orders, and is hastily brought to Rome a prisoner the second time. How hastily he is seized and whirled away we may conjecture from the fact that he left behind him at Troas his warm traveling cloak, which he so much needed now in his old age, and some precious books and parchments. Very pathetically he beseeches Timothy to come to him from Ephesus and to stop at Troas as he comes and bring with him the so sadly needed cloak and the books and parchments.

And now, thus in Rome the second time and imprisoned the second time, the aged apostle is in sorely different plight from his first imprisonment there. No longer is he a favored prisoner. He is prisoner now in the jaggedest meaning of it—lonely, cold, ill-fed, variously suffering, confronted, he knows, by a speedy martyr's death.

But now like a gleam of warm sunshine breaking through the clouds and chill of a bitter day, Onesiphorous on a visit from Ephesus to Rome, and notwithstanding the murkiest danger to himself, manages to get to him—Onesiphorus the Help-Bringer.

And the need for and the ministry of the Help-Bringer are not yet out of date in this sad world of ours. Rather they are very stren-

uously in date and will always be. The Help-Bringer was wanted in the first Christian century. He is still wanted in the closing years of the nineteenth.

That was a beautiful identification Lady Frere gave of her husband, Sir Bartle Frere, the distinguished English ruler of India. Once she had to meet her husband at the railway station and had with her a servant who had never seen the baronet. "You must go and look for Sir Bartle," she ordered. "But," replied the nonplussed servant, "how shall I know him?" "Oh," said Lady Frere, "look for a tall gentleman helping somebody." The identification was sufficient. He found a tall gentleman helping an old lady out of a railway carriage and knew him at once. The need for such in this world of ours is not yet finished.

"There," said a neighbor pointing to a village carpenter, "there is a man who has done more good, I really believe, in this community than any other person who ever lived in it. He cannot talk very much in public and he does not try. He is not worth two thousand dollars and it is very little he can put down on subscription papers. But a new family never moves into the village that he does not find them out and give them a neighborly



welcome and offer them some service. He is on the lookout to give strangers a seat in his pew at church. He is always ready to watch with a sick neighbor and to look after his affairs for him. He finds time for a pleasant word to every child he meets, and you will always see the children climbing into his wagon when he has no other load. He has a genius for helping folks, and it does me good to meet him on the street."

Though the Onesiphorus of St. Paul's day is dead long ago, there is wide room and crying call for such sort of Help-Bringer in these days.

Let this trace of the ancient Help-Bringer stimulate us to be modern ones.

Comfort one another,  
 For the way is growing dreary,  
 And the feet are often weary,  
 And the heart is very sad.  
 There is heavy burden-bearing,  
 When it seems that none are caring,  
 And we half forget that ever we  
 were glad.

Comfort one another,  
 With the handclasp close and tender,  
 With the sweetness love can render,  
 And the look of friendly eyes.  
 Do not wait with grace unspoken,  
 While life's daily bread is broken,  
 Gentle speech is oft like manna from  
 the skies.

## V

## OUR LORD'S SHARE WITH US

ALL instances of share and sympathy have singular fascination. For example, that story of the great Napoleon walking through his camp one night, when the coming day would usher in a mighty battle, and finding a wearied sentinel asleep upon his post ; then the emperor taking himself the soldier's musket and pacing his beat until the sentinel awakened, then restoring his musket to him with no word save of pity for his weariness.

For example again : The Count Turenne, in desperate battle, plunging in among his men, and saying, as he flung apart his cloak : " See, brothers, I am among you ; I do not bid you go where I will not go myself ; see, I have no concealed armor ; fight on with me."

For example again : The Earl of Shaftesbury, with the bluest blood of the English aristocracy in his veins, night after night leaving his princely home in the West End of London, and himself going searching amid the squalid arches of Holborn Viaduct, and getting out of them the little street boys, and taking them to a warm room and feeding them, clothing them, instructing them, and so start-

ing and keeping going his beneficent night schools for the little arabs of the London streets.

For example again : Mr. Lincoln, with the cares of a nation on him, and the anxieties of his great position, leaving the White House and taking the journey to Chain Bridge, where in dangerous neighborhood the army was lying, and himself entering the tent of William Scott, private, condemned to be shot next day for sleeping on his post when sentinel, and Mr. Lincoln himself investigating the case, and discovering that the real right of it was the boy's freedom, and restoring him with untouched honor to the ranks of his regiment.

There is a spell about such incidents ; they entrance and hold us—this giving of themselves of the loftier for the lower. There is in such incidents the “touch of nature which makes the whole world kin.” There is no heart that can help responding to them.

But do we enough think that such heart-compelling incidents as these are but the faintest and farthest illustrations of the essential meaning of our Christianity? For the heart of our Christianity is the humanizing of Deity—the veritable share of Deity in our humanity.

Derzhavin's mighty hymn to Deity is sublimely true :

O thou Eternal One ! whose presence bright  
All space doth occupy, all motion guide ;  
Unchanged through time's all-devastating flight ;  
Thou only God ! There is no God beside !  
Being above all beings ! Three in One !  
Whom none can comprehend, and none explore ;  
Who fill'st existence with thyself alone ;  
Embracing all, supporting, ruling o'er !  
Being whom we call God—and know no more !

But the Deity will not thus remain hidden in the recesses of his own infinity. The eternal Word who was in the beginning, who was with God, and who was God, by whom all things were made, and without whom was not anything made that hath been made, he became flesh, and dwelt among us.

That is the essential substance of our Christianity. That is that without which Christianity is slain, as a man is slain if you transfix his heart. This—the actual and veritable share of Deity in our humanity.

And the sharing goes on, even to the last and grimmest limit. The ruggedest fact in these lives of ours is the fact of temptation. No man escapes it. Even the best blessings hold capsule the possibility of temptation. The man of culture is tempted to become the man of icy isolation, and to despise his fellows. The man of wealth is tempted to forget his stewardship and to consume possession simply

upon himself. The man of strength is tempted to foolhardiness. The man of stainless reputation is tempted into hardness toward his fallen brethren.

As there cannot be sunlight without shadow, so there never is great gift that it does not carry with it the temptation to somehow abuse the gift. There is no more rugged fact than this of temptation. And in experience of temptation our Lord takes share.

Hastily run through the temptations assaulting our Lord there in the wilderness. The temptation after long fasting by bodily want. Every man is in this realm tempted somehow. This physical nature is very real and very imperious. And when the temptation of gratifying right bodily desire and appetite in wrong ways was resisted by our Lord, the pain of refusal pierced. The pang of an awful bodily hunger remained. Veritably our Lord *suffered*, being tempted.

The temptation to presumption. The usual way of descent from the pinnacle of the temple was by the winding stairs. But Satan suggests a presumptuous flinging of the self down, and so exciting the wonder of the people, and quotes Scripture to back the bad suggestion. Who has not felt such assault of presumption—to dare things; to plunge into wild speculations,

heedless of the consequences ; to put Providence to some unusual proof, and so to suddenly win one's desires instead of quietly and steadily reaching them in the appointed way of laborious endeavor ?

And who has not known that other temptation which assaults our Lord—of taking Satan into partnership, of doing evil that good may come ? How such lure solicits when men are tempted to win wealth, and the position and power which wealth gives, by evil twists in business ? How this temptation dogs the steps of the politician, bidding him substitute expediency for principle ? How this temptation of partnership with evil sounds in the miserable maxim, “Being in Rome, do as the Romans do,” and so gain social distinction ?

And notice that our Lord shared with us the *loneliness* of temptation. A graphic touch that, St. Mark gives, “and he was with the wild beasts.” The places wild beasts haunt are not inhabited. Shut away from all companionship, our Lord met and foiled the tempter.

True symbol this of our own temptation. In the last analysis each man must meet his foe and fight his fight alone. Though he be in the city strong, yet in the privacy of his own heart he must meet and master the tempter.

How real prayer must be, sent into the heart

of such a sharing Christ ! How we may reckon on his sympathy ! How we may confidently expect his loving aid ! What unwisdom to attempt the living of such lives as ours apart from him !

## VI

## OUR LORD'S RESISTANCE

WE are too apt to think of Jesus as tempted only in that period which we name, by eminence, the Temptation, when by the suggestion of turning stones to bread, of presumptuously casting himself from the pinnacle of the temple, of making partnership with evil in the furtherance of his Messianic plan, Satan made onset on him. But there is a word of St. Luke's we should remember here : "And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him *for a season.*"

No. Our Lord's life was, like our own, a tempted life from end to end. In certain moods, perhaps this of all the Scripture is the most gracious to me. For we have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities ; but one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

When after the wonder of the feeding of the five thousand there in the grassy plain of El-Batiah, the multitude and the disciples with them were tumultuous with the purpose of forcing on our Lord the crown of an earthly kingdom, again, I am sure, temptation smote our Lord. Keep close grip always on the real humanity of our Lord, and estimate a little what sort of temptation here solicited. The temptation to ambition, that from the carpenter he should swiftly become the king. The temptation of appeal to patriotism ; our Lord was Hebrew, and sympathized with all the finer patriotic longings of the enslaved Hebrews. What might he not, as king, accomplish for his countrymen against the galling Roman yoke. The temptation to painlessness, to the missing of suffering ; to thus reach the kingdom his Messiahship involved, and slip by the awful cross.

But to have thus reached kingdom in any other than the predicted, suffering, self-sacrificing way, would have been falseness to his whole Messianic mission. For our Lord's Messianic kingdom was to be kingdom won neither by the gaping wonder the miracle produced, nor by any other way than that of character and atonement. His path to empire must be the path of the cross.



And here again the old and constantly recurring choice between wrong kingdom and right kingdom was presented to him. Temptation to other than the right and commanded courses solicited.

I think it most suggestive, interesting, helpful, to mark how our Lord managed this temptation to an evil kingdom. Well, our Lord resisted this temptation to an evil kingdom in its beginning. "When Jesus therefore *perceived* that they would come and take him by force to make him a king," the instant the temptation announced itself as temptation, at the beginning of its onset, our Lord girded himself for fight against it. The point of the lodgment of temptation, as an urging force within ourselves, is the point of the beginning. I have found the old schoolmen's analysis of an act of sin exceedingly valuable for myself—suggestion, delectation, consent. If I refuse to allow suggestion to pass over into delectation, temptation to sin can never get on into consent to sin. At once to stop the passing over of suggestion to delectation, right there at the beginning, is to make successful fight against temptation.

Also our Lord at once took active measures against the temptation. In St. Matthew we are told : "And straightway Jesus constrained

his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away." Here is the cause of our own so frequent failure. We dally about stern, strong measures of resistance. But our Lord moved actively and with girded purpose and determined deed against temptation. Soliciting disciples and multitudes were strongly sent away.

Also our Lord immediately withdrew himself from the environment of the temptation. St. John tells us: "He departed again into a mountain himself alone." I think there is most pertinent suggestion here. Sometimes you cannot help it, but when you can, separate yourself as far as possible from the tempting environment.

Also our Lord resisted this temptation to an evil kingdom by summoning to his aid the force opposed to it. St. Mark tells us what he was doing on the lonely mountain: "He departed into a mountain to pray." Disciples and multitudes tempted, he summoned the opposing force of prayer. Here is disclosed a great practical principle for life—opposites exclude each other. When sin solicits, call to yourself and give yourself to the precise opposite of the soliciting sin, and you baffle the sin. The better music of Orpheus so en-

tranced the Argonauts sailing by the island of the Sirens, they did not care for the siren fascinations. Summon the better music, grasp quickly at the opposite of that to which temptation calls.

Also our Lord mastered this temptation to an evil kingdom by the habit of devotion. He departed again into a mountain himself alone. I think that "again" means much. It means the habit of communion with the Father. It means a soul enthralled by righteousness. The fuller I am of the thought of God and desire to please him, the less appetency will there be in me for temptation to get hold of.

Is not such study of our Lord's resistance crowded with help for us? Ought not our Lord's way of persistence to be our own way? Need the battle go against us? It shall not, if we copy him.

## VII

### COMFORT AMID TEMPTATION

IT has many a time seemed to me as though this Scripture were a very garden of comfort amid temptation: "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to

man ; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able ; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

Did you ever notice, my friend, that the gates into this garden of comfort were gates of warning? "Wherefore, let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." This immediately precedes. I think we ought to keep vision on these gates of warning. There is no comfort amid temptation for a foolish and fool-hardy self-confidence. No man is too strong to fall. The self-confident man, how strong soever he may think himself, is the likeliest to fall. The man vigilant toward his own weakness, and so self-distrustful that he keeps heart-hold upon a higher power, is the man likeliest not to fall.

But, passing these gates of warning, I think the Scripture into which they open a very garden of comfort amid assaulting temptations of every sort.

Will you, for a moment, enter this garden of comfort with me? I want to point out for your plucking but a single flower of comfort growing luxuriantly here among beautiful and fragrant ranks of flowers. This is the flower of comfort, blooming amid this garden of it and planted alongside of all its other flowers,

perhaps implied rather than expressed, but nevertheless very evidently there, this : To be tempted is not to sin ; though you are tempted you are not therefore sinful.

There are two significances the word " temptation " carries in our Bibles.

While the great Brooklyn bridge was building I was living in that city and used to get delight in clambering over the rising structure. The chief engineer of the bridge was very kind to me ; and one day while we were together climbing about the bridge he took me to a peculiar sort of a machine. It was composed of great wheels, moving a cylinder set over against some other great wheels moving another cylinder, each opposing cylinder possessing, if I remember rightly, mighty iron teeth or claws, able to seize and hold wire steadily and remorselessly. Coils of the wires which were to go to form the huge cables of the bridge, were being unwound and grasped by these iron teeth or claws. Then the great wheels were set going, so that they revolved in ways opposite to each other, and thus a tense and tremendous strain was brought to bear upon the wire to see whether it were strong enough and honest enough for the high place and dignity of share in the majestic cables whence the roadway was to hang.

That was temptation in the sense of trial.

An old and almost obsolete word tells its meaning more exactly—"tentation." Such sort of temptation often comes from God. Frequently he directly sends it. Take a specimen or two from the old Scripture: "And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham." God put him to trial. God subjected him to tentation. Take a specimen from the newer Scripture. There our Lord and the disciples were with the hungry multitude confronting them on the grassy plain of El-Batiah: "When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? And this he said to prove him, for he himself knew what he would do." That word "prove" holds precisely this significance of testing, trying, of tentation.

But there is another meaning temptation carries in our Bibles. While I was with the chief engineer of the Brooklyn bridge that day, he told me about a lot of wire they had just then been obliged to discard and refuse because it could not meet the appointed test of strain. A contractor furnishing the wire had sent a lot having insufficient honesty and toughness. Of course this sort was cheaper, and the difference in price would go into the

man's pocket. Do you not see that this man, furnishing such wire, was subjected to another sort of temptation? Here was an instance of direct solicitation to evil, and the man, for the sake of the poor pelf, had sadly yielded to it.

In this last sense of direct solicitation to evil, God never tempts any man. The devil does, however, and, as well, a man's own evil passions. Notice what the Apostle James tells us: "Let no man say when he is tempted," that is, in this last and evil meaning of temptation, "I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed."

The first sort of temptation—that is, temptation, trial—God often sends. The second sort of temptation—that is, solicitation to evil—God only permits, but he does permit it. This last sort our Lord knew, felt, vanquished, as well as the first sort. Satan came to him in the wilderness, as well as at other times. He was tempted *in all points* like as we are, yet without sin.

But now, my friend, neither because we are tried, nor because we are distinctly solicited to evil, does it follow that we are necessarily and specifically sinful. Here are some wise words, and true ones too: "To be tempted is not to

sin." We need to remember this. Some sensitive natures conclude that they must be very sinful because they are so much tempted; whereas multiplicity of temptation is often rather an evidence of faithfulness and integrity. The strongest attacks are made upon the strongest forts. Satan does not waste his ammunition. He would not be so earnestly seeking to capture us if we were already completely his captives. Repeated temptation argues the existence of resistance. Sin is consent to the temptation. When there is no acquiescence there is no sin. The greatly tempted Christ was the perfectly sinless Christ. That is a wise and witty thing which somebody has said: "Of all essences, the devil likes *acqui*-escence best." As long as you refuse to yield him that essence, you have defeated him—you have not sinned.

It is one thing to be tempted, Eschylus,  
It is another thing to fall.

So when, against your volition, evil thoughts come thronging round you like pestering flies in summer; or when you are strangely conscious of the tides of passion rushing against your will, and perhaps almost taking it off its feet, but which your will withstands; or when peculiar and iterated trials seem to set them-



selves at straining your endurance, do not therefore think yourself either to have sinned or to be, in a despairing way, sinful. To be tempted is not to sin, it is only to be tempted. And it is common to man ; and the faithful God will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, and somehow he will send either enabling or escape. You see, in the above enumeration, how many flowers of comfort grow in this garden of comfort amid temptation. But just now I instance this one flower, upspringing with them all—to be tempted is not to sin.

I well remember what a bloom of comfort this was to me when I first clearly saw this flower and plucked it for my own using and inhaled its refreshing fragrance—to be tempted either in the sense of trial or in the sense of solicitation to evil, is not necessarily to sin, is not a special symptom of special sinfulness. Have courage, then, and high hope. Only do not fail to see the gates of warning which open into this garden of comfort. Do not be self-confident. Be self-distrustful, with your confidence steadily grappling God. And not only this one flower I have been pointing out for your plucking, but all the other flowers growing in this garden of comfort amid temptation shall bloom for you and invigorate you.

## VIII

## WHAT TO DO IN DIFFICULT TIMES

YOU remember that pathetic poem of our own Longfellow's, entitled "The Chamber Over the Gate." Through every line of it sobs David's lament for Absalom. And the poem brings that distant sorrow into kinship with our own in lines like these :

There is no far or near,  
There is neither there nor here,  
There is neither soon nor late,  
In that chamber over the gate ;  
Nor any long ago  
To that cry of human woe,  
O Absalom, my son !

It was there, in the chamber over the gate, David wanted to sit ; for difficult times had gripped him and very sorely. And we too very frequently want to sit there ; for, as the poem sings, it is not in ancient Mahanaim only that the chamber over the gate is builded.

To be sure the victory had turned toward David in that battle with the rebellious forces which Absalom had gathered and led against his father. But the victory had been sadly dimmed for David by the death of Absalom, toward whom, notwithstanding treachery and

even attempted parricide, his heart would go yearning forth.

Caught in his difficult times and whelmed in a grief passionate, withdrawn, and alone, it was there in the chamber over the gate David wanted to sit and weep his heart out, as he bewailed : “O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom ! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son !”

But in the chamber over the gate *King* David—and just because he was king and had kingly duties pressing—King David might no longer sit, indulging in the luxury of his grief.

“And it was told Joab, Behold, the king weepeth and mourneth for Absalom. And the victory that day was turned into mourning unto all the people : for the people heard say that day how the king was grieved for his son. And the people gat them by stealth that day into the city, as people being ashamed steal away when they flee in battle.”

That would never do. The king, gripped in his difficult times, and sitting in the chamber over the gate, and loneliness bewailing, and thinking of no account the surprising victory his loyal followers had won for him—that would never do ! Such action would take all the heart and loyalty out of the people, would turn all the shining of their brave struggling into shame.

“And Joab came into the house of the king, and said, Thou hast shamed this day the faces of all thy servants, which this day have saved thy life, and the lives of thy sons and of thy daughters, and the lives of thy wives, and the lives of thy concubines; in that thou lovest thine enemies, and hatest thy friends. For thou hast declared this day, that thou regardest neither princes nor servants: for this day I perceive, that if Absalom had lived, and all we had died this day, then it had pleased thee well. Now therefore arise, go forth, and speak comfortably unto thy servants: for I swear by the Lord, if thou go not forth, there will not tarry one with thee this night: and that will be worse unto thee than all the evil that befell thee from thy youth until now. Then the king arose and sat in the gate. And they told unto all the people, saying, Behold, the king doth sit in the gate. And all the people came before the king: for Israel had fled every man to his tent.”

Then the king arose and sat in the gate. He left the chamber over the gate and sat in the gate. In the gate was the place where the king ought to sit. It was the place of presence; it was the place of kingly adjudication among the people; it was the place of kingly and daily duty. And when the king sat in the

gate, and all the people came before the king, that is, passed in splendid and jubilant review before him, appropriately celebrating the tough victory they had just won for him, then the people were sure that the king was still king ; that he meant to do, amid and notwithstanding the hard, sad times which had seized him, his kingly duty ; that he still had kingly solicitude for them and interest in them. So their hearts grew brave, and ready to confront the problems of the resettling and re-establishment of the kingdom which had been much disturbed by the convulsion of the rebellion ; and also the cooling embers of their loyalty began to flame anew.

Is not this snatch of the old story singularly suggestive concerning what we ought to do in difficult times ? Duty notwithstanding—that is what we ought to do and keep doing in difficult times.

I think in sad, hard times we ought not to sit in the chamber over the gate, but rather in the gate, for reasons like these :

Because sitting in the chamber over the gate, instead of sitting in the gate, only weakens ourselves. A merely useless complaining, even a passionate grief selfishly indulged, can breed only an enervating weakness. Which is the nobler picture, David forgetting his kingdom

and the duties belonging to his kingdom in the chamber over the gate, or David, though his heart were sore, remembering his kingdom and bravely doing the duties belonging to it in the gate ?

Also, if we sit in the chamber over the gate when we ought instead to be in our right place in the gate, we shall afford Joab right occasion of finding fault. Joab is by no means a pleasant gentleman. He is very rude and brusque. He plunges in upon your luxurious grieving and bewailing very unceremoniously. He has small sympathy. He lacks heart. But he tells you some very real truths every now and then. And besides, whether you exactly like him or not, he is a very important gentleman. He usually wields a good deal of power. He is quite likely to be an important member of your church or Sunday-school. You cannot well afford to get on without him. It would be by no means best for you to excite his opposition. It is vastly better to follow even his somewhat rude advice, and, even though you are sad, and amid all sorts of obstacles, set about doing the duty next you, than to affront him and give him chance to say the things about you he surely will. I tell you it is vastly better to have Joab for your friend than to have him look askance toward you. Sit in the gate of

your duty, then, hard as it may be, and have Joab your helper rather than your hinderer.

Also, if we sit in the chamber over the gate instead of in the gate, those who trust us will lose heart. That is a great sentence by a great thinker: "Persons are the most potent factors of progress and change in history." And there is no man, be he ever so weak or low, who does not wield the scepter of a personal power over somebody. I was looking at a specimen of that pest, the Russian thistle, the other day. It breaks off from its single stem in the autumn, and all along its edges it is crowded with seed-capsules, and when the winds haste and dash it along the prairies, every time it strikes the ground the seed-capsules burst and scatter their contents; and next season the wide prairie is hirsute with the thistle. And if you sit in the chamber over the gate idly and sadly bewailing your difficult times, instead of sitting in the gate where your duty calls you, you cannot help sowing the Russian thistles of disheartenment and discouragement all about you, especially among those over whom your personality is potent, and who trust you and look up to you. I was reading of a young officer during the war, whose battery had dwindled to a single gun, but who would keep his gun loaded and firing at the enemy. And when at last he

heard the shouts of victory, he said : “ Then I knew that, whatever others did, for me a victory meant keeping my own gun loaded and fired.” And I am sure that lonely gun of his did minister toward that victory, not only by the shot it would keep hurling against the enemy, but also by the sound of a steady faithfulness, even amid the toughest time, it kept sending among his comrades fighting in other portions of the field.

## IX

### PERSONAL CONTACT WITH THE PERSONAL CHRIST

**P**ATHETIC words these : “ Come unto me, all ye that are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” “ All ye that labor and are heavy laden ”—these words mean literally, all ye that are beaten out and fainting with baffled toil ; all ye that are loaded down with burdens. Very universal are these the classes pointed out. For who is not sometime fainting and failing ? who does not sometime feel himself to be overburdened ? Very beautiful the music and the meaning of Christ’s promise over against such states—“ and I will give you rest.”

But fasten attention on those words “ me ”



and "I"—come unto *me* all ye that labor and are heavy laden and *I* will give you rest.

Notice that Christ makes the reception of such rest hang solely upon contact with himself.

And this is evermore the way of Christ. As the sun is the day, so Christ is Christianity. Christ makes himself, in religion, the be-all and the end-all.

I wonder if you think enough of this place into which Christ puts himself, of the tremendous and solitary emphasis which he gives to these words "me" and "I" in all his teaching? You are not to believe so much doctrines about Christ as Christ. You are not to come, in the first place, to ritual and sacraments. You are to come to Christ. Christ, and Christ alone, is the center of moral and spiritual obligation.

"Suppose for one moment," says some one, "the following expressions to have been put into the mouth of Socrates: 'If I drink the cup of hemlock, it will draw all men unto me'; 'Come unto Socrates, all ye that travail and are heavy laden, and he will give you rest.' Or suppose these to have been the words of one of his disciples: 'The love of Socrates constrains us'; 'Whether we live we live unto Socrates, or whether we die we die unto Soc-

rates' ; 'Whether we live or die, we are Socrates' ; 'I drink the hemlock with Socrates, nevertheless I live ; yet not I but Socrates liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith in Socrates, who loved me and gave himself for me.' Applied to Socrates, such expressions are ridiculous. Applied to Jesus Christ, they are a mighty power. Would any follower have dared to apply them to Sakya Muni, or Confucius, or Mohammed? Yet there is that in Jesus Christ which makes them fit with propriety. Why is this? The only possible answer is, there is something in him which belongs to him alone, a worthiness that is absolutely divine." Yes, that is the only possible explanation ; in Christ alone is such personal worthiness as makes prostrate, personal yielding of the soul to him reasonable and right.

There, on one of the summits of the Alps, you may sometimes see projected clearly against the clouds a gigantic, towering, awe-inspiring man, vaster than any man that ever was. But when you look closely, you see that the vast man is only a mirage of your own poor self, having no real existence whatsoever, produced only by the peculiar state of the atmosphere at certain times ; it is only an apparition. They name it rightly when they name it the Brocken

Specter. But here in human history there is One so grand and great, so high and yet so tender and so loving, so divine and yet at the same time so human—and no specter either. He is no manufactured and filmy product of a human imagination, but a veritable flesh and blood real person in human history. He is so unique in righteousness, and benevolent with forgiveness, and powerful with help, that men cannot help feeling it to be the most right and congruous of postures when he puts himself at the center of everything, and says : “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Oh, yes ! that is religion, personal contact with the personal Christ.

And will you notice that right here, in thus making his own personality the center of everything in religion, the Lord Christ feeds and fills one of the most craving hungers of the human heart. There must be “principles for the intellect,” but there must be “persons for the heart.” How true this ! All along the line of history you must get your principle incarnated in a person before you can make much headway with it. See how persons incarnate principles ! Rebellion against the priesthood—Latimer ; justification by faith—Luther ; divine sovereignty—Calvin ; the true doctrine of sacraments—Zwingli ; rights of man as against

lawless tyranny—Cromwell ; religious liberty—Roger Williams. Always and everywhere principles must become incarnated in persons, who shall illustrate them, and draw out to them a human loving and following, before they can make much headway.

See how personal contact with the personal Christ is religious rest, in two or three directions.

Personal contact with the personal Christ is personal salvation, and so is rest. When Dr. Bonar of Scotland was in Jerusalem, he visited the synagogue of the Karite Jews. These Jews are distinguished for rejecting the rabbinical tradition, and clinging only to the Scripture. With their rabbi Dr. Bonar entered into conversation, seeking to preach Christ to him.

"Your nation is scattered ; how is this?" the doctor asked.

"For our sins," the rabbi said.

"And how are these to be taken away?"

"By prayer and repentance."

"But are you sure that God will accept your prayer and repentance?"

"Yes ; we believe that he will."

"But is nothing more needed than these?"

"Nothing ; these are enough."

"But in the days of your fathers something more was needed," the doctor rejoined.

“What was that?”

“The blood of the sacrifice.”

“Yes; the blood was needed then.”

“But is it not needed now?” rejoined Dr. Bonar.

“No; prayer and repentance are enough.”

“But God would not accept the prayers of your fathers without the blood, will he accept the prayers of their children without it?”

“Yes; God is very merciful.”

“True, God is very merciful; yet he was so in the days of your fathers, but he would not accept their prayers without the blood. Do you think he has changed?”

“God is merciful,” said the rabbi.

“Truly, he is so; but if he would not accept the prayers of Moses and David without the blood, will he receive yours?”

The rabbi had no answer but the mercy of God. It was clear that the rabbi felt the need of something other. It was clear he longed for sacrifice sufficient and efficient. This longing is universal. It is met and fed in Christ. Christ is our atonement. Christ is the perfect sacrifice. Personal contact with the personal Christ is spiritual rest, because he is the sufficient sacrifice.

Also, personal contact with the personal Christ is personal sanctification, and so is rest.

That is a beautiful word of Luther's: "A mother's love to her child is much stronger than her distaste for the scurf on the child's head. And even so God's love toward us is far stronger than our uncleanness. Therefore, though we be sinners, we lose not thereby our childhood." Yes; but the true child would seek to throw off its uncleanness, that it might the better approve itself to the mother's love. So the true Christian. True these other words of Luther: "I am a doctor in Holy Scripture, and for many years have preached Christ; yet to this day I have not been able to put Satan off or to drive him away as I would." But what will cleanse us and make us strong to drive off Satan? Personal contact with the personal Christ. Let the Scripture tell us: "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory."

Also, personal contact with the personal Christ is simplification of duty, and so is rest. What oneness it gives to life! what swift divorce from various entanglements—just this simple purpose, to please Jesus!

Also personal contact with the personal Christ is inward and unwasting joy, and so is rest. Conscience includes these things: a perception of the right and wrong in choices, a

feeling that the right ought to be chosen and the wrong shunned, complacency in the right, displacency in the wrong, and such delight in such choice of right as that we consent to it and act it out. And now Christ is the right and true and good. We perceive that choice of him is right choice ; we feel we ought to choose him. We do choose him, and then our souls are filled with the most restful joy.

Art thou weary, art thou languid,  
Art thou sore distressed ?  
“Come to me,” saith One, “and coming,  
Be at rest.”

Hath he marks to lead me to him,  
If he be my guide ?  
“In his feet and hands are wound-prints,  
And his side.”

Is there diadem as monarch  
That his brow adorns ?  
“Yea, a crown in very surety,  
But of thorns.”

If I find him, if I follow,  
What his guerdon here ?  
“Many a sorrow, many a labor,  
Many a tear.”

If I still hold closely to him,  
What hath he at last ?  
“Sorrow vanished, labor ended,  
Jordan passed.”

If I ask him to receive me,  
 Will he say me nay?  
 "Not till earth, and not till heaven  
 Pass away."

Finding, following, keeping, struggling,  
 Is he sure to bless?  
 "Saints, apostles, prophets, martyrs,  
 Answer, Yes."

## X

## NO CONDEMNATION

THIS is the believer's state, that he is under no condemnation.

You will remember that after the disastrous conflict with the Philistines, in the plain of Esdraelon, Saul, the first king of Israel, was slain upon the mount of Gilboa. You will remember that David was afterward crowned king at Hebron. You will remember that Ishbosheth, the son of Saul, refusing to submit to David, set up a rival kingdom whose capital was Mahanaim. You will remember that then, as was natural, for a good while there was clashing between the rival kingdoms, but David waxed stronger and stronger, and his opponents weaker and weaker. At length Ishbosheth, the rival king, was slain; the sceptre of his house was broken and David became master alone.



You will remember, also, the tender love that in the vanished years had bound together the souls of David and Jonathan, the son of Saul. Jonathan had met his death, but David's love for him was immortal. So now, when the crash of war had ceased, and David was seated on the throne his Lord had promised him, with the old love for Jonathan in his heart, David, looking anxiously around, says, "Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?" Then at last it is found that there is a man living that is a son of Jonathan, by the name of Mephibosheth.

But Mephibosheth is by no means a perfect person. Long ago, when he was but five years old, the news had come of the tragic overthrow and death of Saul and Jonathan at Jezreel; in her fright the nurse had caught the child in her arms and had sped away. But also in her fright and flight she had dropped the boy, and henceforth he had been maimed and lame. Mephibosheth was lame in both his feet. Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, was a halting cripple.

But Mephibosheth was in Jonathan, in the sense that he was the son of David's lifelong friend. So David the king, because Mephibosheth was in a most real sense in Jonathan,

brought Mephibosheth into his own royal palace, restored him his confiscated estate ; and thenceforth to him, as the constant resident in his own palace, he did the utmost honor that an Oriental king could do another : bade him sit and eat at his own kingly table, took him into the most confiding intimacy.

All the time Mephibosheth was lame in both his feet ; and all the time Mephibosheth was but a halting cripple. Think of that a moment. Though Mephibosheth was a cripple, the palace was his home and the king's table was his place of daily honor.

During the war a gentleman, a lawyer, by giving his time and money to caring for the soldiers, so nearly impoverished himself that he felt obliged to say to himself that he could, for a time at least, give no more until he had repaired his fortunes. He had a son Charlie, an officer in the army at the front.

One day while he was busily engaged, a person entered the room ; and, although he would not allow himself to look up, the lawyer could not help catching a glimpse of the soldier's well-known uniform. Well, as the story goes, keeping his resolution he steeled his heart and looked down more resolutely at his papers as the man, with slow and faltering steps, crossed over to the table and stood before him. But

he would take no notice of the intruder ; and the man, feeling in his pockets, exclaimed, "I did have a letter for you." At last, beneath the face of the lawyer busily engaged with his papers, the pale, wasted hand laid a letter. A glance showed the writing to be that of the lawyer's own dear son. He hastily opened the letter, which ran thus : "Dear father : the poor fellow who leaves you this was badly wounded in battle, and has just been discharged from the hospital to go home to die. Will you take care of him, and be kind to him, and do whatever you can for him, for Charlie's sake?" It is enough to say that what was asked to be done for Charlie's sake was done.

Yes, the poor, wounded soldier was very ragged, with the hospital stench upon him, and perhaps uncouth and uncultivated, and with no such manners as the lawyer was wont to have in his house and at his table. But do you not see that the poor fellow was, in a most real sense, in Charlie, and that therefore all his grime and filth and possible coarseness went for nothing, and he became, notwithstanding, a most cherished inmate of the lawyer's home? Think of that ! notwithstanding all these things, embosomed in that home.

Do you not see what I have been trying to make plain by these meagre illustrations?

They are meagre—I grant they are—full of places where the analogy will not hold, because no earthly thing is glorious enough to set forth the radiant, spiritual verity, because God is infinitely better and more loving than David ever could be, or than this father that tried to steel his heart.

But God never steels his heart. “For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” But do you not see what I have been trying to make plain? You are a moral cripple. You are lame in both your spiritual feet. You are wounded and spiritually sick, and with the foul stench of sin upon you. You are conscious of another law in your members warring against the law of your mind. You find a law that when you would do good, evil is present with you. You are then brought into captivity to the law of sin, which is in your members. You stumble. You faint. You fall. You are in a terrible wrestle with evil. Sometimes you are overthrown, and evil is triumphant. Often is wrung from you the almost despairing cry, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”

But notwithstanding the fact that you are a moral cripple, lame in both feet; notwith-

standing the weakness and stench of sin upon you ; notwithstanding the fact that sin so often masters you, and you falter and fail ; notwithstanding your wretchedness and the cutting feeling of failure, and the slight apparent growth in grace ; still by faith, standing in Christ Jesus, you have entered into a most wonderful spiritual state in him ; still for you, struggling, fearing, fainting, now making a little headway, and now stepping so sadly back, for you, imperfect as you are, and only at the very best partially sanctified as you are, there is therefore now no condemnation, because you are in Christ Jesus.

The believer is Mephibosheth, with patrimony more than restored, and an abiding place in the palace, notwithstanding his crippled feet. The believer is the private in the officer Charlie's home, notwithstanding he is only a private, and with all the wounds and scars and weakness of battle on him. For, for the believer Christ has done everything.

“Ye are complete in Christ.”

For the believer Christ has met and completely mastered every claim that even the exactness of divine holiness can discover. Being in Christ, the poor, faltering, struggling believer passes into and stays in that wonderful state—

“No condemnation.”

## XI

## THE CLOSED AND THE OPEN GATES

**R**IGHTEOUSNESS is right being, the getting set in right relations. There are two ways looking toward entrance into such righteousness. There is the way, frequently attempted, always failing, of the closed gates. It is the way by the law. "But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God it is evident." This way by the law is the way of the closed gates, because it is a way too late ; it never begins early enough.

Think a moment. This law is for the regulation of the personal life ; it demands that, all the time, each one of us should be, in thought, in motive, in volition, precisely what he ought to be. This law is for the regulation of our social life ; it demands that in all our intercourse with others we should be exactly right. Also, this law sways scepter over our duty to God ; it demands that toward him we should unceasingly hold, to the last gossamer of limit, just the reverence, trust, love, obedience, we should.

But who has done it? Take even so genial a nature as that of Oliver Wendell Holmes. This is what he says : "The first unequivocal

act of wrong that has left its trace in my memory was this: refusing a small favor asked of me—nothing more than telling what had happened at school one morning. No matter who asked it; but there were circumstances which saddened and awed me. I had no heart to speak; I faltered some miserable, perhaps petulant excuse, stole away, and the first battle of life was lost. What remorse followed I need not tell. Then and there, to the best of my knowledge, I first consciously took sin by the hand and turned my back on duty. Yet, if I had but won that first battle!"

Is there not here a specimen window into everybody's experience? The fairest life is conscious of some flaw of failure toward the law. Ah me, not only the first battle, but many since, has everybody lost! This law which grasps the self in the self's self, the self in relation to others, the self in relation to God—who has been toward this law precisely, and all the time, obedient? And the trouble is that, seeking to get into right being and right relations by way of the law, you are too late; you have not begun soon enough; you are already confronted by a broken law. And so, the gates of a justifying righteousness along its path are closed. Besides, this way by the law of getting into right being, right relations, is a

way of the closed gates because, the law being broken, you cannot mend it.

The empire of this law includes yourself, your relations to others, your relations to God. Suppose this were possible. Here is a day ; in that circle of the hours twenty-four, you have perfectly kept the law, as toward yourself, as toward others, as toward God. But here is another day. In this day you failed. There was an allowed envious feeling in this day ; there was a bitter word which set its blister on your lip ; there was a want of holy reverence and loving trust toward God. Yet in that first supposed day you did perfectly. But what are you going to do with this bad day ? Was it possible for you on that day when, by the supposition, you wrought so well to do more than you ought ? By the supposition, on that day you touched the limit of the law. But did you, on that day, go beyond the limit ? Can you go beyond the limit ? Can you be more than perfect ? But here is this bad day—yet you can accumulate no surplusage of perfection by which to piece out its defects. Again the gates close. Having broken the law, I cannot gather moral capital and strength with which to mend it.

But also, this way by the law of getting into right being, right relations, is the way of the



closed gates because the law can tolerate nothing but an exact obedience.

Some of you made an easy voyage to Europe the last summer ; you sailed over the wide sea. You were able to sail over it because of the exactness of law. What was that water you sailed over? Why, it is the union of hydrogen and oxygen in the proportion of two volumes of hydrogen to one volume of oxygen. In that proportion, always in that proportion, always exactly in that proportion. Did the proportion vary to the shade of a shadow there had been such explosion as had instantly brought back to this world of ours "chaos and old night."

You hang on the exactness of law. And in the spiritual realm there must be exactness of law also. For what is the moral law of God? It is the expression of the divine nature. That perfect divine nature can only express itself in a perfect law. And a perfect law can only receive and accept the answer of a perfect obedience.

But, confessedly, I have not rendered the answer of a perfect obedience. Yet God, along the way of his law, can accept no other than a perfect obedience. "He that doeth them shall live in them."

So, when I think of the perfect God, ex-

pressing himself in perfect law, and only able, by reason of his very perfectness, to receive an exact obedience—the gates toward justification by way of the law close hopelessly again.

Then I turn, thankfully and joyfully, to the way of the open gates. “Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

A tender scene comes to my memory. It was years ago. Mr. Van Meter was superintendent of the Howard Mission. He had come over to Brooklyn with some waifs he had gathered from the streets, to see if he could not find homes for them. There was one little fellow—nobody knew who were his father and mother—for whom no home opened. Mr. Van Meter stood the little fellow on the pulpit-cushion, and flinging his arms around him, said: “Here is one of the Lord Christ’s little children; has nobody a home for him?” There was no answer. Several times the question was repeated. Still there was no response. At last a childless gentleman, rising in the back of the church, and stretching out his arms, and exclaiming, “I have got a home for him,” came forward and clasped the boy to his breast. At once for that street waif there was a mighty change. Hitherto shelterless, clothless, foodless, schoolless, he was now im-

mediately supplied, because this gentleman had all these things, and, accepting the little fellow for his own, at once conferred upon him shelter, clothing, food, school.

Many times this scene has come to me as a perfect parable of redemption. The gates which sin has closed to our own attempt stand welcomingly open when we turn toward and accept by faith the proffered and justifying righteousness of Christ. "Ye are complete in him."

Let me steadily turn from the shut gates of my own poor tryings at a justifying righteousness, and thankfully and immediately enter the open gates of a justifying faith in Christ, and so have peace with God.

## XII

### DRAWN—DELIVERED

I GOT new vision recently of the way our Lord delivers. I was studying the meaning of that word "deliver," in that clause of the prayer our Lord taught us, "But deliver us from evil." I found that word "deliver" has peculiar significance; it means to *draw* to one's self, and so to deliver. I think that very beautiful and helpful.

I remember a long tussle I had with a man once, seeking to deliver him from the thrall of drink. I found I was able to do it in just this way, by drawing him to myself.

The man, a dear friend of mine, came to me and, in effect, said: "This fight against this appetite of mine is terrible ; it is harder at certain times than at others ; every now and then there is an awful access of craving ; my will is very weak ; your will against this appetite is unmanacled and strong ; now I need your stronger will to range itself with my weaker one, and especially in the seasons of critical temptation, when I am seized with desire almost irresistible. I want you to let me come to you, sit with you, talk to you, somehow shelter myself in your stronger will, and so with you I think I can better fight away this tyrannous and hungry passion."

"Well," I said, "come ; come at any time, by day or night, and I will stand with you, talk to you, pray with you, in every way I can think of fight with you this fiend of drink."

So he used to come every now and then, and we would have together a grand quarrel with his enemy.

I remember one long summer day. He had come to me in the very early morning in the throes of a tremendous contention. "Let us

go out into the air," I said. We hired a carriage and set out for a long drive. Every now and then we would pass some saloon. In the agony of his hankering the sight would be too much for him. He would order the driver to stop and insist on entering. It was useless for me to remonstrate.

But there was one thing I could do, and I did it. I went into the saloon with him. I implored and threatened the saloon-keeper. I saw to it that my friend got nothing stronger than soda-water, or something of the sort. Then I could persuade him to resume the ride.

So the long day spent itself. As the shadows of the evening began to gather, his terrible desire began to lessen, and finally it passed. He was delivered; contact with my stronger will, stronger as regards this special matter, had prevailed. For many a year thereafter my friend was free with a great deliverance.

I thought of all this when I came upon the peculiar significance of this "deliver" in the prayer our Lord taught us. The prayer really is, "O Lord, deliver us from the evil one by drawing us to thyself."

That is the real and true method of deliverance. An artist is delivered from ugliness by his love of beauty. A decent person is deliv-

ered from foulness by his love of purity. A scholar is delivered from ignorance by his love of knowledge. An industrious man is delivered from idleness and laggardness by his love for his work and duty. The best way to fight a thing is to get enthralled with love for its opposite.

Our Lord Jesus Christ is the incarnation of everything high, holy, noble, beautiful, lovely. He is strong in will for all these and against their opposites, and he waits with welcome for me, with his intimate friendship. He calls me to himself by the gracious drawings and persuasions of his Spirit. He will stand on my side as against temptations, girding my weaker will with his stronger. He will bind me to himself in an indissoluble union. And thus drawing me to himself, he will give deliverance.

This is the practical suggestion to which I come. The best way to get rid of and bring disaster to a special temptation, to this and that plying of the evil one, is not so much to stand against it in the girded prowess of your own will, as to fly to Christ, shelter yourself in him, consecrate yourself to him, let yourself be drawn to him. Then, being thus in him, you are somehow mighty with his might. Drawn to him, he lifts you into deliverance.

## XIII

## THE FRAGRANCE OF SERVICE

MARY lovingly drenched the Lord with the costly spikenard, and—the house was filled with the odor of the ointment. How beautiful that is !

You see, such sweet and gracious ministry could not be confined. Her service terminated ostensibly on Jesus, but it did more and went farther ; it made an atmosphere of fragrance.

It seems to me this exquisite incident is a very real and true parable of hearty service Christward, anywhere and always. Service toward our Lord not only serves our Lord, it diffuses fragrance in addition.

There is certainly this perfumed effect reactive in the person serving, the fragrance of an increased love.

That is our too perpetual Christian plaint—we have so little love. “Oh, if we loved more !” we are constantly saying, “how much easier everything in the Christian life would be !” And what we say so much is true utterly. The more we love, the easier will be the achieving of every Christian thing to which we should set our hand.

But we make steadily one radical mistake.

We vainly and vaguely wait for love, hoping that, vaguely waiting thus, somehow and from somewhere, the tides of it will flow in upon us and overwhelm us.

Here is a tender bit I came on once. A Cincinnati paper says: "In a pottery factory here there is a workman who had one small invalid child at home. He wrought at his trade with exemplary fidelity, being always in the shop at the opening of the day. He managed, however, to bear each evening to the bedside of the 'wee lad,' as he called him, a flower, a bit of ribbon, or a fragment of crimson glass, indeed, anything that would lie out on the white counterpane and give color to the room. He was a quiet, unsentimental man, but never went home at night without something that would make the wan face light up with joy at his return. He never said to a living soul that he loved that boy so much. Still he went on patiently loving him, and by and by he moved that whole shop into positively real but unconscious fellowship with him. The workmen made curious little jars and cups upon their wheels, and painted diminutive pictures down their sides before they stuck them in the corners of the kiln at burning time. One brought some fruit in the bulge of his apron, and another engravings in a rude



scrap-book. Not one of them whispered a word, for this solemn thing was not to be talked about. They put them in the old man's hat, where he found them. He understood all about it, and, believe it or not, cynics, as you will, but it is a fact that the entire pottery full of men, of rather coarse fibre by nature, grew quiet as the months drifted, becoming gentle and kind, and some dropped swearing as the weary look on the patient fellow-worker's face told them beyond mistake that the inevitable shadow was drawing nearer. Every day now some one did a piece of work for him and put it on the sanded plank to dry, so that he could come later and go earlier. So, when the bell tolled and the little coffin came out of the lonely door, right around the corner, out of sight, there stood a hundred stalwart working-men from the pottery with their clean clothes on, most of whom gave a half-day's time for the privilege of taking part in the simple procession and following to the grave that small burden of a child which probably not one had ever seen."

Now, is it not the most evident of things that the tender love, both of that father and of his sympathetic fellow-workmen, for the "wee lad," grew and greatened, as both father and fellow-workmen did for the little child? Every

flower, bit of ribbon, fragment of crimson glass the father carried to the child, every curious little jar or cup the workmen fashioned and painted and sent to the little fellow, within themselves started an increased love for him.

Here is instance of the practical philosophy of life ; the more they *did*, the more they *loved*. And can you not see how, as they did more and so loved more, their hands would get defter and quicker in sweet serving ?

Why, it is plain enough. If Mary, simply meditating beautiful ministry, had waited, in a vague way, for more love to impel her, she had never done the service beautiful and bountiful. But, already loving, she swiftly did the gracious thing which love suggested, and an increased fragrance of love diffused itself, reacting through all her heart.

This is the practical philosophy for life ; in order to love more, do more ; and so, and so only, will love be more.

But not only did this service of Mary have reactive fragrance within herself ; it had outward and permeating fragrance toward others. For one thing, it set a perfumed example for others. How through all the ages have fragrant deeds of service for the Lord got impulse and sweet contagion from this ministry of Mary's.

And for another thing, this perfumed ministry of Mary shamed Judas. And Judas ought to be shamed. Never you mind what Judas thinks or says. It is not worth minding. Simply do you the loving deeds for Christ that your love prompts, and you shall best manage Judas by stifling him in the rare fragrances your ministries shall fling off. He may carp and criticise. But Judas can never stay nor permanently damage the redolences of loving deeds.

#### XIV

#### THE SAFE DEPOSIT

**R**ECALL a time of financial panic. Values are falling ; credit is shaking ; notes are being called in wherever possible ; unexpected demands for payments are being made ; resources are failing ; great business enterprises are wearing cloudy aspect ; worst of all, the banks are being touched ; this one has gone under, that one, the other ; men meet in anxious, sometimes in excited, groups ; this man has a deposit in a bank which for the time has refused him payment ; that man, that other. How anxious and drawn the faces of men are getting ! But here is a man—his walk is leisurely, his face is calm, his eye serene. He has

a deposit in a bank, a very large deposit. But he is utterly persuaded of the financial soundness of his bank. Somehow he knows his precious deposit is in safe keeping. He is not fearful, agitated, questioning.

Do you know, my friend, such illustration tells the precise significance of this great scripture?—"For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." The words, "which I have committed unto him," mean exactly the deposit entrusted. One would think the apostle might be downhearted, distrustful, questioning. He is a prisoner in Rome the second time. He is not captive with his captivity comparatively cushioned, as he was the first time. He was much dependent on companionship naturally. But now he is almost entirely alone, and, by some of his loudest friends even basely deserted. He is cold, this aged, imprisoned apostle. How pathetic his request for his traveling cloak he had somewhere left behind him ! He is, in the loneliness of his hard imprisonment, hungry for occupation. He would have Timothy hasten to bring him his books and parchments. He is set upon by evil plotters. Alexander, the coppersmith, has laid many bad charges against him. He is denied all legal help, must stand

of supporters utterly bereft, as he argues his own case before the imperial tribunal.

One might suppose the apostle, gripped in such circumstances, would somewhat lose heart and fear and fail in faith. But he does not in the least. He is serene and strong of heart. He has made precious deposit. He is utterly certain that deposit will be, to the last degree and against all contingency, safeguarded. How his unquivering confidence sounds out as he lays his heart open in the steady words: "For the which cause I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to safeguard the deposit I have entrusted to him against that day."

Well, let us think a little. Jesus Christ will allow us also to make deposit in him. We may make deposit in Jesus Christ of the treasure of our personal salvation. Indeed, we must. My friend, toward personal salvation, in ourselves we are bankrupt. This treasure of our personal salvation can be safeguarded for us only as we do make deposit of it in Jesus Christ. Analyze a moment a single action. There is the outward action itself, the deed which flows from our finger tips. But this outward embodiment of the deed is not the whole of the action; behind the action is the volition, the willing to

put the deed forth, that which moves toward and determines the act of the hand. But this volition behind the action is not the whole of it ; for back of the action and the volition are the motives which urge toward the willing and the doing. They are those forces in us, springing from the desirability of the contemplated deed itself and the sort and quality of moral nature of which we have become possessed, which press the will into volition toward the external deed.

But neither are motives, nor volition, nor external deed, the whole of action. Behind them all, and the mother of them all, is the conception of the deed in thought ; the initial idea of it, somehow rising in us as the bubbles rise out of the depths of lake or pool. These four elements have entered, and must enter, into every deed which clothes itself with the visibility of finished action.

And now, this fact is never to be forgotten—the empire of the holy law of God is not confined merely to an action which has at last come to bloom out of idea, motive, volition ; but it also sways its stringent scepter over the *entire process* of an action, from external deed, along the whole line back to and including the initial thought of it. The holy law of God demands that the external deed adjust itself with

its demand of righteousness, and also, pushing back its claim, demands that volition, motive, beginning thought, be perfectly righteous too. Suppose a man have sinful idea and sinful motive and refuse to yield volition to them, and so stops the farther pushing to bloom of a sinful action. He has not sinned in act, but he has sinned in desiring motive, and in beginning suggestion. He is not *so* sinful as he would have been had he allowed volition to complete idea and motive in the full-blown action. But in the stern and searching vision of the holy law of God he is still sinning in his thought and in his desire as well.

The Missouri River rises near the boundary between Montana and Idaho, among the Rocky Mountains. But it rises within the jurisdiction of the United States. And that jurisdiction extends along all the mighty river's flowing course. So a deed rises within the jurisdiction of the holy law of God. And that holy law demands that from its beginning, along the entire course of it, through motive, through volition, till it flows out into the consummated action, that action be a righteous one. Such is the analysis of but a single action.

Now multiply this single action by all the deeds of which our lives are full, and estimate, at least a little, the reach and rigor of the holy

law over us, and let us confess ourselves, as we must confess ourselves, sinners in its awful presence. "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin." My friend, frankly, I see no hope for us save in the atoning Jesus Christ. I turn to him and make deposit of my personal salvation in him. He has satisfied the law and made it honorable. He is the fulfilling of the law for righteousness to every one believing. I dare make deposit of my personal salvation in Jesus Christ. I am sure he will safeguard it. I know whom I have believed. I beseech you, make deposit in him also. What you invest in him can never come to bankruptcy.

## XV

### THE REGARDING CHRIST

**V**ERY precious is any disclosure of the personal Christ. I have been waiting lately before that scene of the disciples straining at their oars against the storm driving down upon



them, there on the sea of Galilee, and of the treatment of them by the Lord, and it seemed to me as though our Lord stood out amidst it all in a kind of fresh vision. Let me tell of one of the helpful lights in which I seemed to see him. The personal Christ reveals himself there as the *regarding One*.

I came upon this pathetic incident the other day. It was first published in a Scotch school journal. A gentleman, when a boy, had greatly loved the game of cricket, nor in his later years had he lost love for it. But he had gone blind. He had a boy, however, who shared his father's enthusiasm, and who was a member of the school team. When his boy played, the father, though blind, was always present, anxiously noting the fortunes of the game as friends described to him the going on of it. The father died suddenly. But the next week the boy, though most tenderly attached to his father, took his place in the school team. He played the game through as, expert though he was, even he had never played before. When the game was done he went to the umpire. "How did I play?" he asked with intense interest. "Never better. You outdid yourself," was the reply. "Because," the boy said, as he turned away, "it was the first time my father ever *saw* me bat." The boy felt

that death had opened his father's eyes, instead of the more completely closing them, and that, looking down from the upper sphere, the father, for the first time, had vision of him at the manly game both himself and his father loved. And the thought was to the boy the utmost stimulus, and naturally.

Whether it be true that those who have passed on before us are able from the celestial heights to regard us as we do and endure in this "low-thoughted spot which we call earth," it is not given us to know. But it is as sure as sure can be that the Christ who met and mastered death in glorious resurrection and ascension, both can and does. How exquisitely it comes out in the narrative of these disciples captured by the storm! The five loaves and the two fishes had been superabundant feast for the five thousand men besides the women and the children. The multitude, awed and delighted at the miracle, would force the crown of a merely earthly dominion upon the head of Christ. The disciples are smitten with the contagion of the purpose. Not such dominion will the Christ be lifted to. He will be king only by the spiritual suffrages of hearts. He sends the multitude away. He constrains the disciples to take boat and row diagonally across the lake to Bethsaida Julias, where he will meet

them. Meantime, he spends the hours in prayerful vigil upon the mountain. The disciples push off, and, in the middle of the sea, are hurttled at by the sudden storm. But neither the storm, nor their straining at the oar against it, is obscured to the Master's notice. In certain moods, to me, the most shining words in all the Scripture are just these, "And he saw them toiling in rowing." "Distressed," the Greek is, panting, breathless, with the tremendous toil of attempting to make head against so terrible a tempest. But both storm and toil he saw and noted.

If any one would have further certainty that he is still the regarding Christ, though now unseen by us and parted from us, as to bodily appearing, by death and resurrection and ascension and seat upon the universal throne, turn to the first chapters of the Revelation and mark how, to the seven churches, the burden of the messages of him before whose immeasurable glory St. John fell as dead is still the burden of particular notice and regard. To the church at Ephesus: "I know thy works and thy labor and thy patience." To the church in Smyrna: "I know thy works and tribulation and poverty." To the church in Pergamos: "I know thy works and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is." To the

church in Thyatira : "I know thy works and service and charity and faith and thy patience." To the church in Sardis : "Thou hast a few names, even in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments ; and they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy." To the church in Philadelphia : "I know thy works : behold, I have set before thee an open door." To the church of the Laodiceans : "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot. I would thou wert cold or hot." Though in highest heaven, still is he the regarding Christ.

Oh, receive the fact for cheer, for stimulus, for careful judgment of the self. Here you are, standing at the oar of the daily toil, or seeking to make head against some difficulty preventing gracious service, or with hand lapsed from the oar of religious duty letting the wild world storm drift you how it will, or caught in the devastating gusts of sorrow, with wrecked home and with those to whom your hearts cling dashed from you out of sight—it is false that you are the sport of chance. It is false that no Divine heart beats for you. It is false that your lapse from duty is unnoticed. It is false that you are the merely storm-driven thing you sometimes fear you are. He sees you nobly toiling in rowing. He sees you as clearly if you ignobly refuse to toil and are letting the

tempest carry you anywhither. This is his word to you, as really as it was to those bestead disciples—"It is I," the regarding Christ.

## XVI

### A SPECIMEN

**T**HERE is a great value in a specimen. A specimen is a lens through which you can descry and get notion of the whole class of which the specimen is part and instance.

The other day I was in the house of a friend who is interested in a Montana gold mine. He was showing me some specimens of the sort of gold that mine produces; thin flake gold, bunched nugget gold.

It is not necessary for that friend of mine, in order to know its sort, to examine every particle of gold that has been mined or that will be, yonder in that patch of Montana where the mine is placed. A thorough study of these specimens is sufficient. They are windows into the whole mine. There is vast value in a specimen.

What is the real gold for life? It is the unquivering and accepted certainty, notwithstanding everything which may seem to make against it, that God loves.

One says most truly, "Nothing is more important in religious thought and life than a true conception of the character of God. Little as we may think of it, every day is bitter or hopeful, every duty commonplace or inspiring, every sacrifice irksome or joyous—in short, every day's work and experience full of low and selfish meanings, or of noble and divine meanings, according to the practical thought of God which we are carrying about with us day by day."

Now the gold for life is the certainty that God loves. Even as Wordsworth sings :

One adequate support  
For the calamities of mortal life  
Exists, one only, an assured belief  
That the procession of our fate, howe'er  
Sad or disturbed, is ordered by a Being  
Of infinite benevolence and power,  
Whose everlasting purposes embrace  
All accidents, converting them to good.

I have been delighting myself recently with this specimen of the divine love : "Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus."

Look at this specimen from these two angles, the angle "though" and the angle "since."

*Though* Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus he allowed Lazarus to sicken and to die. Just now Jesus is absent on one of his

journeys. He is two days away at Bethabara over in Perea. Palestine is the place of sudden, sharp, frequently fatal fevers. One of these smites Lazarus while Jesus is away. Without any intervention on the part of Jesus, and though he loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, he allows the furious fever to run its swift, consuming course, and in that home which Jesus loved, Lazarus lies dead.

You need not go very far, anywhere, to match that picture at this moment: a home which Jesus loved, and yet with one of the loved ones lying dead in it. Here is a wail that came to me the other day from such a home. She was a young wife, a most earnest Christian. Herself and her husband had just made a home together. Then her Lazarus was smitten. "I am unhappy, miserable," she writes. "In view of his triumphant death I am surprised and disappointed in myself, that I am so miserable. I didn't know it was possible for so much suffering to be crowded into three short months. I am ambitionless, powerless, crushed, unwilling, and apparently unable, to take up the work of life again. It is so much harder to live than to die."

*Though* Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, he did not immediately answer the prayer of the sisters.

I do not think that in all the history of prayer, nor in all the gathered liturgies of it, can be found a prayer, more truly prayer, than this which the anxious and watching sisters dispatched to the absent Jesus, "Lord, he whom thou lovest is sick." What trust in it—his love reason enough for quick reply and interference. What submission in it—never so much as hint as to method of answer; all that left to his better wisdom. What clinging in it—our arms are short, it is on thine arm we confidently rely. What delicate persuasion in it—it is enough that thy love should be reminded that he whom thou lovest is in sore need of thee.

But though, I doubt not, the messenger hurried with the prayer, and pressed the two days' journey separating the Lord from Bethany into less than one, the Lord does not hurry with his answer. Yes, and you can match that picture also still: the Lord waiting yonder in Bethabara, beyond the Jordan, in Perea, when we so sorely need him here and now in our Bethany. He does not always hurry, you know. "In the fulness of time" he came to the world. In the fullness of time he will come to the sisters of Bethany and to us. It is better so. What seems to us delay is but the ripening of his purpose.



*Though* Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, he left the sisters to the regretful bewailing of the human "if." "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." They both said it, meeting at last the apparently laggard Jesus. If, if—ah me, how often we must now say it, when some sorrow overwhelms, and we cannot help feeling it might have been hindered from flooding us if only we ourselves, or some one else, had done otherwise. This "if" in the heart and on the lip, there is nothing commoner, more trying.

But turn now to look at this specimen of the divine love from the other angle, "since."

*Since* our Lord loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, he waited for benignant purpose.

Tell me, my friend, looking through the whole story, do you not plainly see that every way the waiting was better and more loving than had been the swifter coming? Ah, study your specimen from this other angle.

*Since* our Lord loved, what helps for faith his waiting yielded at the last! This is the meaning of Jesus to the sisters, to the disciples, to you and me. It is as though he said: "I would have you trust me; even in the darkest hour let not your trust fail. That it may not, let me disclose myself to you. Behold me, I am the resurrection and the life." And so the

dead Lazarus rises at his call, and Jesus is seen to be the resurrection and the life. What shining help for faith burns against the black background of that waiting!

*Since* our Lord loved, what evidence he yielded us that though our dead pass into death they do not pass beyond his power. He waited and let Lazarus die and be buried, that he might show, by recalling him from death, as he could in no other way, that even death was thrall to him and not master over him, and that our dead never get beyond his mastery.

*Since* our Lord loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, he gave them better than they had ever dared to pray for or to dream. They prayed that he would not let Lazarus further sicken. His overmatching answer was, Lazarus risen from the dead.

Yes. Here is a specimen. If I must look at it from the angle "though," let me not forget to look at it from the angle "since." And the light from the "since" scatters the darkness gathering about the "though." God loves. And as I can plainly see it in this specimen, such love as his will make all the strange and hard things plain at last; will cause it to be seen that the strange, hard things even are, after all, but the better evidences and opportunities of his love.

## XVII

## CONCERNING PRAYER

THERE are two reasons, my friend, among multitudes of others, why it seems to me you should be certain that prayer is a valid and achieving force.

One reason is, that it is not conceivable that God would steadily cheat you.

I know a place where every May and June the choir of the birds sets itself at singing in a way most ravishing. It is precisely the place most song-birds the most love. It is a little stretch of lonely road, somewhat removed from any houses, and yet not too far removed ; for most song-birds like to haunt the margins and the fringes of human habitations. The road dips into a slight valley, and on one side there is a forest, but of trees not too closely set, so that the sunlight can scatter the denser shadows ; and on the other side there is a descent and tangle of shrubs and vines and lesser trees. Here, in the spring and early summer, the warblers gather in great companies, and on any day, and especially in the afternoon sunshine, it has seemed to me as I have waited and listened, there were almost as many and as various notes of bird-song as there are waving leaves

on the poplar and oak and scrambling vines set about so thickly. You shall hear the exquisite tone of the song-sparrow, and the long-drawn deliciously liquid note of the wood-thrush, and the quick whistle of bluebird, and many another carol and chirp and twitter and warble lending themselves to and weaving themselves through the sweet and variegated chorus.

The other day I drove through the place and stopped my horse and listened. But there was nothing anywhere save the desolate winter stillness.

And yet, in a few weeks now, those songsters flying in these days through southern atmospheres, shall begin to feel a strange pressure of migration in them, and shall begin their long flight northward; and though to-day the places of their northern hauntings are hostile with snows and bitter with the winter blasts, the migratory instinct in the little and songful creatures will not mislead them; they shall find a summer waiting for them to nest and sing in, though now, whither they will come, is under the vigorous rule of winter. This is the point I would have you see, my friend: God does not cheat the warblers. He matches the instinct in them with the summer they shall surely find.

Do you remember Bryant's poem of the  
"Water-fowl"? It is deep and tender with  
the truest teaching of religion :

Whither, 'midst falling dew,  
While glow the heavens with the last steps of day,  
Far, through their rosy depths, dost thou pursue  
Thy solitary way?

Vainly the fowler's eye  
Might mark thy distant flight to do thee wrong,  
As, darkly painted on the crimson sky,  
Thy figure floats along.

Seek'st thou the plashy brink  
Of weedy lake, or marge of river wide,  
Or where the rocking billows rise and sink  
On the chafed ocean's side?

There is a Power whose care  
Teaches thy way along that pathless coast,  
The desert and illimitable air—  
Lone wandering, but not lost.

All day thy wings have fanned,  
At that far height, the cold thin atmosphere,  
Yet stoop not, weary, to the welcome land,  
Though the dark night is near.

And soon that toil shall end ;  
Soon shalt thou find a summer home, and rest  
And scream among thy fellows ; reeds shall bend  
Soon o'er thy sheltered nest.

Thou'rt gone, the abyss of heaven  
Hath swallowed up thy form ; yet, on my heart  
Deeply hath sunk the lesson thou hast given,  
And shall not soon depart.

He who, from zone to zone,  
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight,  
In the long way that I must tread alone  
Will lead my steps aright.

The instinct pressing northward in the bosom of the water-fowl is not deceptive. The God who placed it there does not cause the winged creature hastening toward Labrador to miscarry because of it. The bird trusts its instinct, and flying through the pathless skies comes upon its "summer home and rest."

He who, from zone to zone,  
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight,  
In the long way that I must tread alone  
Will lead my steps aright.

Surely I shall find my human instinct matched as well by a reality.

And if anything is certain it is that the instinct of prayer has been implanted in you, my friend. Many a time, even before a contrary volition could catch it, you have instinctively lifted the Godward cry. Caught in some crisis, staggering beneath some heavy burden, everything in you presses you to call on God. You do not stop to reason about it; you do it before a laggard reasoning can arrange its premises and come to its conclusions. I think here is a granitic basis for you, my friend. Trust you your instinct. Over against it, and match-

ing it, there is a Heavenly Father's heart and help. Is it not after all a thing too densely inconceivable—that God should steadily mislead you, a soul who has the instinct of prayer ramifying through your entire nature?

Another reason why, it seems to me, you should refuse to doubt the real good and force of prayer, is that it is quite conceivable God can answer prayer without the breaking of any natural law whatever; and so the fact and presence of natural law need not be a cause of stumbling to you concerning prayer.

I was reading lately a deeply interesting interview with Mr. Edison. This is what he said, speaking with great earnestness: "I tell you that no person can be brought into close connection with the mysteries of nature, or make a study of chemistry, or of the law of growth, without being convinced that behind it all there is a Supreme Intelligence. I do not mean to say a supreme law, for that implies a consciousness; but I mean to say with emphasis a Supreme Intelligence, operating through unchangeable laws. I am convinced of that. And I think that I could, perhaps I may some time, demonstrate the existence of such Intelligence through the operation of these mysterious laws with the certainty of a demonstration in mathematics."

I think that is a fine and real distinction another has made, that "the universe is not governed *by* natural law, but rather *according* to natural law."

Just recall, my friend, some of the marvelous achievements of Mr. Edison. How, say fifty years since,—yes, a much less time ago than that,—they would have been pronounced impossible because opposed to natural law. But Mr. Edison has wrought them, not against, but according to natural law—by the better knowledge of these laws and by the quickest and most thorough obedience to them, and so by the manipulation of these laws, but breaking never a gossamer shred of them, to special ends and uses.

And I do not think you can consider it at all out of or against reason to say and to believe that certainly God, who knows all law and is the fountain of it all, can himself, through his infinite knowledge of natural law, so use and lovingly manipulate natural law that along the very unchangeable channels of it shall flow benignant answer from his heart and hand to you.

Therefore pray, my friend, and believe in prayer as a valid and achieving force. You are not doing athwart the analogy of things when you pray; you are doing according to the an-



alogy of things. Pray then. You are not in an orphaned world. God is your Father, and you are his child.

## XVIII

## CONCERNING SPECIAL PRAYER

THAT is good counsel which one of the sweetest and quaintest of our earlier English poets has given us concerning daily and habitual prayer :

When first thy eyes unveil, give thy soul leave  
 To do the like ; our bodies but forerun  
 The spirit's duty ; true hearts spread and heave  
 Unto their God, as flowers do to the sun.  
 Give him thy first thoughts then, so shalt thou keep  
 Him company all day, and in him sleep.

Walk with thy fellow-creatures, note the hush  
 And whisperings among them. Not a spring  
 Or leaf but hath its morning hymn ; each bush  
 And oak doth know *I AM*—canst thou not sing?  
 Oh, leave thy cares and follies ! Go this way,  
 And thou art sure to prosper all the day.

Yes, a day entered through the gates of daily and habitual prayer is aptest to be a prosperous day.

But there are peculiar seasons when we are specially pressed to pray. It is of such times

God's ancient singer sings in the eighty-sixth Psalm: "In the day of my trouble I will call upon thee; for thou wilt answer me."

Think a moment when specially to pray. The note concerning prayer which the psalm strikes, is prayer in the day of trouble. Yes, in the day of trouble do not grow despairing, or nervous and anxious, or sadly listless, withdrawing the hand from the daily duty, or petulant and irritated toward Providence; rather refuse to be or do these things by giving yourself to special prayer.

In the day of trouble, of business perplexity, pray. Have you ever thought how the right to pray about such matters is implicitly involved in that petition our Lord incorporated into the model prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread"? Bread there is a large word, and stands for that whole side of our life and activity which has to do with our sustenance and comfort. It is into this side of things that our business roots itself, and therefore special liberty of petition concerning it is granted us. And when all sorts of obstacles and tangles emerge in the realm of our business, when the times squeeze as they often do, when values fall and payments are laggard, and almost every man is sore bested, one of the best and most overcoming things a man can do

about this or that perplexity in business is specifically to pray about it. Various and surprising help of skill, wisdom, clear vision, if not of sudden deliverance, is apt to stream in upon the man who prays.

In the day of trouble, of a great sorrow, pray. A picture held me the other day. It was the interior of a European peasant's home, rude and poor. A little child, deathly sick, was lying upon a bed made of chairs and pillows. On a table, bare and small, stood the remedies ; and intently gazing upon the sick child, watching to get the first sign of response to the remedies just given, sat the physician. The young father stood beside his wife with the look of sad endurance on his face, and the mother sat with her arms flung upon the only other table in the room, with her face hidden in her arms, but praying, I am sure. What better thing could the mother be doing than praying amid such troublous sorrow? Somehow prayer, in such a time, anchors to God, if it does nothing more, and prevents the soul from drifting loneliness off into the salt and bitter sea of a complete despair.

In the day of trouble, of great weakness, pray. There are times when the nerve of energy seems utterly to relax, when strength seems to have been sucked up by some con-

fronting difficulty or duty. If you must cease doing everything else then, you need not cease special praying. You are in the precise crisis for special prayer. Often a conscious and confessed and dependent weakness is the best strength. Just to hang on God, is frequently to quickest achieve. When the angel of the Lord had laid his finger on the thigh of Jacob, and when, the pillar of strength for the wrestler being thrown out of joint, he could no longer wrestle, but must simply and only cling, he conquered. We vanquish oftener by clinging than by wrestling.

Also in the day of trouble, of great anxiety for others, or of some tormenting and haunting doubt, pray. Keep at special prayer in such special days of trouble, anyway. And remember always this great fact about a day of trouble—it is impossible that you come upon one in which you may not pray.

Think a moment concerning how to pray. The psalmist tells us, "In the day of trouble I will call upon thee." Call, then; call audibly. It is a good thing, in the day of trouble, just to put into words and voice, before God's throne, the whole matter; to disclose and declare to him all the most hidden reserves and windings of the troublous, carking bother; to hold back nothing of it. Frequently the drag-

ging of a thing forth out of its dimness of mere thought about it, and the compelling of it to clothe itself in distinct and identifying speech, is a tremendous help. And then there is also all the help which comes from the feeling that you have actually made your Heavenly Father a confidant.

Call also with the speech of thought. Let the mind dwell inaudibly on the trouble and on God. Call also by holding yourself in steady communion with God. Keep in prayerful and communing mood toward God, whether your prayer and thought focus themselves on the particular trouble or not.

All this is real calling, real prayer. That beautiful hymn of James Montgomery tells it admirably :

Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,  
Uttered or unexpressed ;  
The motion of a hidden fire  
That trembles in the breast.

Prayer is the burden of a sigh,  
The falling of a tear,  
The upward glancing of an eye,  
When none but God is near.

Prayer is the simplest form of speech  
That infant lips can try ;  
Prayer the sublimest strains that reach  
The Majesty on high.

Prayer is the contrite sinner's voice  
Returning from his ways,  
While angels in their songs rejoice  
And cry, "Behold he prays!"

Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,  
The Christian's native air;  
His watchword at the gates of death,  
He enters heaven with prayer.

Nor prayer is made by man alone;  
The Holy Spirit pleads,  
And Jesus, on the eternal throne,  
For sinners intercedes.

O thou, by whom we come to God,  
The Life, the Truth, the Way,  
The path of prayer thyself hast trod;  
Lord, teach us how to pray.

Think a moment, now, of the use of special prayer. The psalmist sings its use also: "For thou wilt answer me." That is the use of special prayer, that God will, somehow, answer.

Sometimes by calmness; you have been nervous and fretted and anxious; you have specifically prayed about the troubling thing, and there has come to you a most gracious calm and holy strength and resigned readiness to suffer or to do. Often in this way God answers special prayer. Sometimes by relief, by a kind of prophetic certainty of deliverance, God answers special prayer. Sometimes by

reply delayed God answers special prayer. Lazarus died, and the Lord still tarried ; but he came with delayed but with how much more glorious answer than the prayerful message to him of Mary and of Martha meant. Sometimes by denial God answers our special prayer, but only when denial of our request is better for us than assent would be. Do you enough remember that the answer of denial is still real answer? And with God denial is always better blessing. Sometimes by unrecognized answer God makes reply to special prayer. You pray, and apparently nothing comes of it. But as the days go, you find that surely something has come of it. The causes for your trouble have dissipated slowly, perhaps, but steadily and really. You have been fully answered, though at the time you knew it not.

Use special prayer for special times.

More things are wrought by prayer  
Than this world dreams of.

. . . . .

For what are men better than sheep or goats  
That nourish a blind life within the brain,  
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer,  
Both for themselves and those who call them friend ?

For so the whole round world is every way  
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.

## XIX

## CONCERNING HOPE

HOPE is expectation. It has an eye for horizons ampler and nobler than those of the narrow present. As a great teacher says, "Hope covers all that ground which the mind occupies in looking into the future for certain great values and results, not merely in forelooking, but in looking forward with special and concurrent joy." Hope makes even the struggle of the daily life, and the wear and tear of it, "not like the convict's trample on the world's great treadmill, but like an ascent on the luminous steps of duty to the very gates of heaven." "O blessed hope," exclaims Thomas Carlyle, "whereby on man's strait prison walls are painted beautiful, far-stretching landscapes ; and into the night of very death is shed holiest dawn."

All great doers have been great hoppers. I have read how, in his later life, General Grant once said to a personal friend that his habit of day-dreaming, a kind of large and persistent hoping, had never left him. In his earlier life he had resigned from the army, and things had been going pretty steadily against him. He was working away on a farm near St. Louis,



and his wont was to carry a load of wood to the city for sale, and then ride back in his empty cart. As he rode he threw himself out of his hard surroundings by hope. He had longed to command a regiment, and he had also longed to visit Europe, and have his wife share his sight-seeing. And it was a favorite sort of hoping dream of his, as he rode homeward in that empty wood-cart in the gathering evening, to think of himself as again in the army, and this time as full colonel; and then to think of himself as, with Mrs. Grant, making the tour of Europe. Foolish enough such hoping seemed for a poor farmer jogging homeward in the dusky sunset in an empty wood-cart. But the hope was inspiration to him. And the reality of it all at last burst the bounds of his most daring dreaming. Hoping thus, even in General Grant's then circumstances, was vastly better business than a weak bewailing of his hard and hostile plight. And it is a noteworthy fact that, all through the war, General Grant's utterances and dispatches had in them this note of hope somehow sounding. I do not think you can find anywhere in them so much as the shadow of a suggestion of despair or of ultimate defeat.

One of the finest pictures with which history can present you is that of Milton, old and poor

and blind, odious to the restored royalists, his friends exiled from him, himself distrusted by those who in the brave days of Oliver Cromwell had most trusted him, slashed at by cutting tongues, but abating not a jot of heart and hope—setting himself to the making of the mighty poem which he was sure the world would not willingly let die.

A picture like this, which some one sketched in shining words, once stirred me. Somebody had come from a distant province to visit Rome. He had stored his memory with the great sights that he might tell them to his friends at home. But one day was a red-letter day for him. He was walking along the Apian Way. A mighty and various crowd, soldiers, senators, favorites, ladies in lavish dress, were jostling each other in the thronged thoroughfare, riding, walking. Amid the concourse his eye falls for an instant upon a company of soldiers guarding and escorting a wan, wearied, half-blind, manacled prisoner. The visitor is gazing at this sight listlessly. Just then there is a burst of music, then a wave of applause and shouting sweeps toward him; and then the golden chariot of the emperor, drawn by splendid horses in glittering harness and with Nero himself lolling in the chariot, dashes by. Ah, that is a red-letter day for this visitor.

He has seen the emperor! He thinks no more of the slight, manacled prisoner. When he goes home he hastens to tell his friends about the grand sight of the emperor and never thinks to mention his sight of the poor prisoner. But the really grand sight the visitor saw that day was not the emperor, but was the prisoner. For the prisoner was Paul the apostle, and he rules the ages. But the scepter of Nero has become but a forgotten bauble.

And one reason why this prisoner, Paul, wrought so, and still rules so, is because of the hope in him. He knew himself, through hope, to be more than he seemed. He might be prisoner, but he was also ambassador of a deathless king and of a deathless kingdom. How he widens the horizon for the slaves, the poor, the persecuted of that great Rome, and for all men through the centuries as he says his benediction: "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost."

Yes, the great doers have always been great hoppers. Tennyson sings of, "The mighty hopes which make us men."

Have you ever thought, my friend, of the worst loss which can come to a man? Loss of property? that is a sad loss, but not the worst.

Loss of friends? that is a sad loss, but not the worst. Loss of opportunity? nor is that the worst of losses. Loss of hope, when the heart dies and the courage fails and the hands hang listlessly and a man begins only and sadly to drudge—this, the loss of hope, is the blackest loss.

“I’ve just got back from Washington, where I’ve been since the election trying to get an appointment,” said a politician.

“Gave up hope, eh?” said a sympathizing friend.

“Oh, no,” was the quick reply. “I came home to hope. It’s cheaper to hope here.”

I like that, my friend; hope anyway. Get, if you must, the cheapest place to hope, but hope!

I think we should refuse to lose hope, even when hard times grip us, for one reason because *God is*. I like much that snatch from Luther’s “Table-Talk”:

“At one time I was sorely vexed and tried by my own sinfulness, by the wickedness of the world, and by the dangers that beset the church. One morning I saw my wife dressed in mourning. Surprised, I asked her who had died. ‘Do you not know?’ she replied; ‘God in heaven is dead.’ ‘How can you talk such nonsense, Katie?’ I said; ‘how can God

die? Why, he is immortal, and will live through all eternity.' 'Is that really true?' she asked. 'Of course,' I said, still not perceiving what she was aiming at; 'how can you doubt it? As surely as there is a God in heaven, so sure is it that he can never die.' 'And yet,' she said, 'though you do not doubt that, yet you are so hopeless and discouraged.' Then I observed what a wise woman my wife was, and mastered my sadness."

I think we should also resolve never to cease from hope because *Christ is*. It is winter now, but God's gift of the summer is ahead. And how much that gift includes; soft airs, waving banners of leaves, choirs of birds, the green grass hanging its robes of verdure from all the hills, the bespangling of the flowers—what multitudinous and various gifts the gift of the summer means! And what surprising things the gift of Christ includes. When you are downhearted wait a little to meditate on his Scripture and see if you can after all help hoping: "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

I think we should also steadily hope, because the *promises are*.

I stood amazed and whispered, "Can it be  
That he hath granted all the boon I sought?"

How wonderful that he for me hath wrought !  
 How wonderful that he hath answered me ! ”  
 O faithless heart ! He said that he would hear  
 And answer thy poor prayer ; and he hath heard  
 And proved his promise ! Wherefore didst thou fear ?  
 Why marvel that thy Lord has kept his word ?  
 More wonderful if he should fail to bless  
 Expectant faith and prayer with good success.

I think we should also hope because God's plan is one of steady and sure advancement :  
 “ Wherein God shows us things in the slow history of their ripening. ”

And we should also hope because heaven is.  
 “ Let Jerusalem come into your mind,” was the charge of the prophet Jeremiah to the exiled Jews. Let the heavenly Jerusalem come into your mind when your heart fails and your hope flags. This life but vestibules the eternal temple, and every shyest and largest hope shall be brimmed with fulfillment there. Sang the ancient psalmist : “ But I will hope continually.”  
 In the blackest night make that your song.

## XX

### “ ME ” AND “ HIM ”

ALL things are in interdependence. Each thing is somehow intricate with other things. No one thing is for itself alone.

There on the seashore, the rocks support the tangled mazes of the seaweed ; and the seaweed deadens the shock of the thundering breakers, and so the seaweed helps the supporting rock.

Have you ever waited to notice what variety and beauty of hue are imparted to old fences, granite boulders, tree-trunks, by the humble lichens? It is surprising, if you take account of it, the glory of color the lichens yield to that which, but for them, would wear only a dull and wearying grayness. But this wrapping with color is not the whole function of the lichens. They are the miners of the rocks. They may seem to be but stains upon them, but they are at their duty. They are strongly acid and dissolve the rock and make slight patches of depression in it. Growing and decaying, they leave a thin film of soil in which larger and nobler lichens can find sustenance. These are mightier in dissolving ability. After a time there is roothold for mosses, "which absorb much moisture from the air and help to decay the rock by keeping the surface damp, for, where water is, there frost and gases can get to work." So mould is made in which higher vegetation, with clasping and burrowing roots, can find residence. And at last your compact granite boulder is broken and crum-

bled into soil in which harvests, on which man hangs, germinate and grow and ripen. It is a real relation this, which the staining lichen holds to the harvest of perhaps a century ahead.

Apparently, what can be more helpless or useless or unrelated than an angle-worm? But one has well called them "plowers before the plow." They render the earth fruitful. They are immense subsoilers. They change the deep earth into surface earth and so renew the soil exhausted by much harvest yielding. By careful computation it has been found that in a certain section on the west coast of Africa, by the poor angle-worm, sixty-two thousand and more tons of subsoil are brought to the surface of each square mile each year.

Here is the story of their doings, as another has told it: "The most insignificant insects and reptiles are of much more consequence and have much more influence in the economy of nature than the incurious are aware of. Earthworms, though in appearance a small and despicable link in the chain of nature, yet, if lost, would make a lamentable chasm. Worms seem to be the great promoters of vegetation. which would proceed but lamely without them, by boring, perforating, and loosening the soil, and rendering it pervious to rains and the fibres of plants; by drawing straws and stalks



of leaves and twigs into it ; and most of all, by throwing up such infinite numbers of lumps of earth called worm-casts, which, being their excrement, is fine manure for grain and grass. The earth without worms would soon become cold, hard bound, and void of fermentation, and consequently sterile.”

Mr. Darwin found once that fourscore seeds started into growth, which seeds he had taken from a small ball of mud which had glued itself to the leg of a bird. “Not a bird can fall to the ground and die without sending a throb through a wide circle.”

Queer and noteworthy—that interrelation which Mr. Darwin traces between cats and clover. Purple clover blossoms fertilized by pollen carried from flower to flower by the humble-bees ; so the more humble-bees the more clover. But the combs of the humble-bees contain a peculiar delicacy for field-mice ; so the more field-mice the less humble-bees and the less clover. But the field-mice are luscious morsels for the cats ; so the more cats, the less field-mice, the more combs of the humble bees, and the more clover ; so the more cats kept upon the farm the more luxuriant clover-fields.

Thus is it true that all things are in interdependence, that each thing is intricate with

other things, that no one thing can be for itself alone.

But even more emphatically true is this in the higher realm of souls. Here, in mightiest measure, is it a fact that none of us liveth to himself, and that no man dieth to himself.

I have hung many a time in thought over that snatch in "In Memoriam," in which Tennyson so wonderfully sings the coming and the growth of the consciousness of the "me" :

The baby new to earth and sky,  
What time his tender palm is prest  
Against the circle of the breast,  
Has never thought that "this is I."

But as he grows he gathers much,  
And learns the use of "I" and "me,"  
And finds "I am not what I see,  
And other than the things I touch."

So rounds he to a separate mind  
From whence clear memory may begin,  
As through the frame that binds him in,  
His isolation grows defined.

This is the great fact which announces itself to the growing child; the fact of the "me," of the difference between the "me" and the "not me," of that real and awful loneliness upon which every one of us is islanded.

Yet, at the same time with the coming and growth of the consciousness of the "me,"

there is necessarily the coming and growth of the recognition of the other than the "me," the "him."

And still, though there is a chasm so deep between the "me" and the "him," the "me" and the "him" are in interdependence and interrelation. The "me" cannot be without reference to the "him," and the "him" cannot be without effect upon the "me." None of us liveth to himself and no man dieth to himself.

But there is this great difference which emerges between the lower realm of things and the higher realm of souls—in the realm of things the interrelation and influence of one thing on another must be what it is ; while in the realm of souls the interrelation and influence of soul on soul may be this or may be that, as the soul shall determine.

Think of the interrelation and influence of a real kindliness of a kindly soul on another and stronger soul. One Sunday night, years since, a young man and his young wife strayed into a church service. They were a lonely couple in a great city. They were neither of them Christians—rather, both of them carelessly, blatantly unchristian. With the services they were not so specially impressed. But after the services, as they were standing about looking

at the church, the pastor approached them, and flinging his arm over the shoulder of the young man, welcomed him and his wife in a way so genuinely cordial that the hard edge of their strangeness was at once smoothed away and the young couple were sure somebody had real interest in them. "We'll go to that church again," they said together after the warm welcome. They did.

It was not long before both husband and wife accepted Christ as their Saviour and their Lord, and united with that church. It was a great trophy that pastor began to win that night, not by his sermon, but by his welcome. Almost penniless, and obscure, and quite disheartened as that young man was on that night, that welcome began enthralling. To-day he is the member of a firm which flings the meshes of its business the land through ; and all his business is done under the eye of Christ ; and perhaps the best and most winning Sunday-school worker and superintendent I have ever known is he who was that lonely young man ; and his wife is a steady helper with him in all strong and high endeavor. I did not win him. I knew him years after he had been won. But what a winning it was ! How mightily worth the while ! How the "me" in the pastor helped and blessed the "him" and

“her” in them, and through them many, many others.

And what that pastor did, the “me” in you can do toward the “him” next you. I knew a silent church usher once. He had no gift of public speech or prayer. He was more habitually silent than I think any Christian ought to be. But he magnified his office as church usher. And it is an office of tremendous possibilities if one will but so account it. He showed strangers to seats as though he loved to do it ; saw that they had hymn books ; made the way easy for them ; told them if they would come again he would always do his best for them. When he died four persons said : “What won me to the Lord Jesus was his ushering.” Ah, if the “me” will, in how many ways can the “me” capture for the good, and uplift and keep the “him.”

Look at the matter from another side. Take an instance of example downward. It was a so-called reputable theatre,—by all odds the most reputable in the city. But even so-called reputable theatres will put upon their boards shameless plays. This theatre did. Some professed Christians went to see this play. They were shocked and loud in their denunciation of it. But they cannot help the marshaling of their influence on the side of such

things, for they were present at that play. Nor was it possible for them to be present at that play and not have the "me" in them cast a bad spell over the "him" or "her" in others. Necessarily, being there, they were seen there. And the sight of them there was a sanction for the presence of others there.

There is no use denying facts like these. No man liveth to himself. He cannot if he tries to. He is immeshed in a mighty web of interrelated life. No "me" can act without reference to some "him."

One of the sad things, in these latter days, to a thoughtful observer, is the unwillingness of the "me" to deny himself for the sake of the "him." But the "me" is responsible for the sort of influence it flings out toward the "him." And the "me" cannot dodge the responsibility or get rid of it.

I am myself, but I am for and toward others. "He was indeed the glass wherein the noble youth did dress themselves." What better ambition for the "me" than to be such glass of purity and high honor that the "him" may be won to robing himself worthily! But whether the "me" be this or not, he is a glass of some sort to the "him." And he cannot help being; "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself."

## XXI

## THE RIGHT TIME FOR THINGS

APPII FORUM was a place forty-three miles from Rome, the terminus of the canal which threaded the Pontine marshes—a place described by Horace as “full of insolent barge-men and exorbitant tavern-keepers.” Three Taverns was another little station on the road toward Rome, distant from Rome some three-and-thirty miles.

Along this road, pushing northward toward Rome from Puteoli, the southern port of the great city, the prisoner Paul has passed, has reached Appii Forum, and has gone onward to Three Taverns.

Let us remember. Paul has been for nearly three years a prisoner, two of them at Cæsarea ; the last of them filled with the stormy voyage, the shipwreck at Malta, the waiting there through the three winter months. Then the year has been filled with the subsequent voyage to Syracuse, in Sicily, to Rhegium, on the southernmost extremity of Italy and in the straits of Messina ; then to Puteoli, the southern port of Rome ; and then with the land journey of a hundred and fifty miles to Rome itself. This land journey has been accomplished, save the

last stage of it, reaching from Appii Forum and the Three Taverns to the metropolis. A long-time prisoner, and still a prisoner, much buffeted by shipwreck and various labor and privation, is the apostle.

And what shall be his reception in the vast and wonderful metropolis which he is now for the first time to see? The Christians in Rome—will they receive him and welcome him? Or have the Judaizers, who were always dogging Paul with enmity and hindrance, steeled the hearts of the Christians in Rome against him? What chance shall he have in Rome for the preaching of the gospel? And what shall be the outcome of his appeal to the cruel Nero, the then Cæsar? Questions enough crowding him, anxieties enough harassing him, doubts enough assaulting him. Prisoner as he is, a human sympathy will be very precious.

And here at Appii Forum and at the Three Taverns, the sun shines for Paul and the clouds scatter. The Christians in Rome have heard of his coming, and deputations from these Christians have started down to meet him. And here at Appii Forum, and here again at the Three Taverns, the kindly eyes of Christian brethren look upon his worn face, and warm hearts welcome him, and the hands of a loving and Christly fellowship grasp his hands, man-



acted though they be, "Whom, when Paul saw, he thanked God and took courage."

And will you notice the timeliness of this Christian sympathy? Just when Paul most needed sympathy, it met him, and his heart grew strong.

There was a beautiful anticipation in the sympathy of these Christians, a gracious putting of themselves in Paul's place. These Christians did not wait for the expression of their kindly sympathy till Paul had reached Rome; did not wait till he, a stranger in the great city, should have somehow found them out. They anticipated his need and, with a sweet forecasting, met him with their love and help just at the very time he needed it the most.

So the right time for sympathy is, when it is needed. And Christians, with clear and loving intention, are to discover when it is needed, and proffer it there and then.

There is common complaint that young men do not enough frequent the churches, somehow drop away from them, get and keep separated from them. I am persuaded that a frequent reason for this is because when a young man, a stranger, appears in our larger churches, he does not enough find welcome and handgrasp of the sort which sought out Paul at Appii

Forum and at the Three Taverns. A friend of mine, when he was a young man, went to live in a college city. He was lonely and sometimes heartsick. But he was a Christian, and was determined to stand for his faith, and in the strange place to take up his Christian duty. He went to a church in the denomination to which he belonged, took a sitting, was a regular attendant also at the weekly prayer meeting. Do you know that though he had thus identified himself with that church, and was regularly present, for three long years not a soul spoke to him, not once was the hand of a Christian welcome extended to him. He came and went, and they let him come and go. He longed for some recognition on the part of members of that church, he gave them opportunity to yield it to him, but they somehow would not or did not. He must have been a remarkable young fellow, that friend of mine, not to have dropped off.

But he did not. He was a Christian—a good, grand, strong one. Meantime he had made other acquaintances in the city and had ceased to feel his loneliness, could get on now very well without the welcome and sympathy of the attendants at that church. At last, when three years were gone, and when the young man did not peculiarly need welcome and ac-

quaintanceship, a prominent member of the church proffered recognition and acquaintance. I think that young man had a tough time. I think many young men, looking into the doors of our larger churches, have as tough a time. I am persuaded that right here is a real and great reason why many young men, not set in families, living in boarding-houses, like the Sunday newspaper better than the church service. There are multitudes of churches that are so careless of the strangers, especially of the young men who come to them ! What we want in every church and Sunday-school is more Appii-Forum and Three-Tavern Christians ! Oh, it is a most gracious thing to go through life not stinting sympathy, but wealthily yielding it, and in the time for it !

## XXII

## HAVING THINGS ON YOUR SIDE .

ONE of the quaintest of our earlier English poets sings :

We are but farmers of ourselves, yet may  
If we can stock ourselves and thrive, uplay  
Much good treasure for the great rent day.

Wise words these of a great thinker : " How true that there is nothing dead in this universe ;

that what we call dead is only changed—its forces working in inverse order. ‘The leaf that lies rotting in moist winds,’ says one, ‘has still force, else how could it rot?’ Our whole universe is but an infinite complex of forces—thousand-fold from gravitation up to thought and will; . . . in all which nothing at any moment slumbers, but all is forever awake and busy.”

It is a great thing to have mighty forces working for you instead of against you, so enabling you to “uplay much good treasure for the great rent day.” The other summer I made a swift and easy voyage from Liverpool to New York because great and wonderful forces were working for us; the strength of the immense steel shaft which sustains the screw was mightier than the impact of the waves; the winds helped instead of hindered; the water, kept out by the stanch iron hull, made buoyant pathway for the huge steamer. But it was far different with the steamer “Spree.” Her broken shaft, the inrushing waters into her leaking hold, the tumbling waves capturing her between their hollows, the winds and currents driving her helplessly from her course, all these vast forces were not her servants but her masters, working not for her but all the time against her. Mr. Emerson puts the matter well: “The water

drowns ship and sailor like a grain of dust ; but trim your bark and the wave which drowned it will be cloven by it and carry it like its own foam, a plume and a power.”

I never cease to wonder at the electric cars speeding through the city. A brush of copper wires rapidly revolving against a cylinder, and from somewhere the mysterious force is gathered which takes the car and passengers in its unknown arms and carries them easily over the hills as well as along the levels. It is all well as long as the electricity is working for you, but when the trolley wire breaks and the lurid, green-flashing sparks sputter danger at you it is another matter.

Right here is a great difference between savagery and civilization—that in the one case man is slave of the great, natural forces and working against him they control him, but in the other case, through knowledge of these forces, man harnesses and controls *them*.

And there are certain vast moral and spiritual forces at work within every one of us which make for life if they be working for us, which make for death if they work against us. What, after all, is the disposition of a man but the sum total of a man's habitual tendencies in this direction or in that? You say of this one or that one, “It's just like him” ; and you mean,

and you mean rightly, that having general notion of his habitual tendencies you are sure he will do thus and so. Mr. Dickens' Scrooge might be counted on for being close and mean because he had allowed and caused the forces of his nature to set in such direction. Tiny Tim, awaking the better nature dormant in him, gave this nobler nature chance to work against the lower and at last to compel it into defeat, but only through a great conflict and moral upheaval in Mr. Scrooge. "Habit a second nature! Habit is ten times nature," exclaimed the Duke of Wellington. How accurately Shakespeare puts it when he says, "Use doth breed a habit in a man."

Now there can come no vaster blessing to a man than that he have this magisterial and inward force of habit working for him rather than against him, working steadily toward all righteousness and nobleness rather than from them. Such a man is as a boat clasped by a strong current and therefore carried toward sunny harbor. A metaphysical friend of mine has, I think, admirably reduced the laws controlling habit to two main ones. This is the first law: "Habit diminishes feeling and increases activity." How true that is! He will vanquish some musical instrument he says. He begins. How tough the beginning. How he must feel his

way, seeing that this finger strikes that key and not another ! How slowly the fingers move, as if they were somehow chained from doing the thing which he would have them. But by and by a kind of automatism has usurped the place of the feeling laggard and difficult, and with a sort of glorious unconsciousness the fingers find the keys, and with a swiftness melodiously surprising. And moral and spiritual habits are under the sway of this law too. All habit is, of every sort.

This is the second great law controlling habit : “Habit tends to become permanent and to exclude the formation of other habits.” This law is evident upon its face. Now suppose a man gets this force of habit working for him on the side of nobleness and righteousness, what an acquisition for a man ! Into what splendid and benignant thralldom a man comes !. He shall reach a state at last where, while it will never be an iron necessity that he do not sin, for his moral freedom will remain, it will have become *certain* that he will not, he shall have become so settled in the grooves of righteousness. This, I think, is at least a hint of the meaning of the Scripture about the crown of life ; the man has entered into the fixed kingdom over himself toward righteousness. Nothing can be more important for a young person than that he see

to it that this compelling inward force of habit is on his side. This is the real and beneficent philosophy of the Christian Endeavor pledge ; it gives direction toward the empire over one of the best habits.

### XXIII

#### A GREAT FACT

**W**HAT a great fact that is, told us in the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews and at the twenty-fifth verse, concerning our Lord, "seeing he ever liveth" !

Said Napoleon at St. Helena to his physician, Dr. O'Meara, about the battle of Waterloo : "The British were defeated at midday. I had beaten the Prussians. Before twelve o'clock I had succeeded. Everything was mine, I may say. But accident and destiny decreed otherwise." And nevermore was Napoleon to lead conquering hosts to victory.

For every one of us in this world there is to be a last and Waterloo defeat. By original strength of constitution and various care we may, perhaps, somewhat put off the day of it ; but the day will surely strike when against each one of us death will make triumphant onset.



The point is, this death, which has already whelmed so many and which is sure some day to whelm each one of us, whelmed our Lord also as drenchingly and entirely. His heart broke. The spear of the Roman soldier cleft his heart in twain. The precious contents of it reddened the rough cross. No son of Adam more utterly dead than he !

But the supreme fact is that what is Waterloo defeat to all of us was not to our Lord. Forth from death he came in glorious resurrection, in the strongest sense alive.

Think. Have you thought enough of it, my friend ? Make catalogue of what preceded that death and the incidents of the death itself : The unspeakably tender yet straining farewell to the disciples in that upper room ; the awful and exhausting agony in Gethsemane ; the rude arrest and the hurried walk from Gethsemane to Jerusalem ; the three separate stages of the trial ecclesiastical—before Annas, before Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin during the night, before the Sanhedrin again at daybreak ; the trial civil and in that three separate stages—before Pilate, before Herod, before Pilate again ; the total sleeplessness for our Lord through that long, eventful night ; the scourging, derisions, blindfolding, and rough smittings of the pitiless Roman soldiery ; the journey to

Golgotha, himself bearing his cross ; his fainting beneath its weight from his weariness and nervous strain ; the six hours' torture of the cross ; at last the literal heart-break on the cross ; the death ; the cleaving of his heart by the Roman spear.

But have you noticed enough that our Lord came forth in glorious resurrection from such death and from such wasting concomitants of it as though death had been to him a kind of refreshing and healing bath ?

He did not rise out of death a smitten and wounded invalid. He did not rise with bleeding and gaping wounds. What marks of wounds he chose to carry were but marks of wounds which had found their healing. Our Lord rose in glorious resurrection out of such lacerating and subduing death in vigorous health. He was utterly alive, in all of life's strongest meanings. The death he went down into, from that death he came up out of, with death completely vanquished.

Will you notice also, my friend, that out of such death he rose into fuller and larger life than he had had before death smote him ? He reached up into a new realm and sort of life. No longer was he stricken by the sun-heats, as before at Jacob's well ; no longer so captured by sleep that the roarings of the tempest could

not waken him, as before on the sea of Galilee ; no longer needing food or water, as before in the house of Simon or at the hand of the woman of Samaria. A life of largeness and liberty is his life now, a life of swift appearings and disappearings ; shut doors do not hinder him, distances do not compel paths of weary travel for him. And yet he is not ghost or disembodied spirit. " Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself : handle me and see ; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. "

And when, as to bodily appearance, our Lord leaves this world of ours, he does not leave it by the way of death again. He leaves it by ascension. They are gathered with him there on the top of Olivet. He is talking with them. He has slipped the leash of gravity. He begins to rise. Steadily, majestically, he rises still. They strain their eyes to see him, those disciples, as he recedes into the utmost blue. A bright cloud wraps him from their vision. Thus resurrection blossomed into ascension.

What can you say of him but what the apostle so wonderfully and truly says, " Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more ; death hath no more dominion over him " ? What affirmation possible, concerning this demolishing victor over death, but the

affirmation of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, "Seeing he ever liveth"? Ah, what a transcendent fact this is! Our Lord is a living Lord, and with Death, to the last shred of his black empire, shattered beneath his triumphant feet.

Now, from this great fact that he ever liveth, what consolation comes rolling in upon the soul held still in this realm of the dying, of the questioning, of the troubled!

The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews bases the reality and the persistence of our Lord's intercession for us on this great fact: "Seeing he ever liveth to made intercession for them." Think of the consolation of the intercession of the ever-living One as regards our prayers!

I confess it, my friend, I am afraid sometimes of my own prayers. I know so little; my horizon is so narrow. I can so slightly estimate my own true needs.

But what am I?

An infant crying in the night :  
An infant crying for the light,  
And with no language but a cry.

Yet cry I must. The experiences of life press cries out of me. Albeit my cries are no more intelligent than an infant's wailings, still I must

wail forth my desire, my hope, my passionate entreaty. Yet how often, like an infant, do I cry for the worst things ! How slightly can I discover what is the real best for me ! But this is the consolation, though I pray so meagrely and so ignorantly even in my best moods, I need not fear, for I pray into the heart of the interceding Christ.

There is a passage in the writings of the late Dr. Henry B. Smith, of the Union Theological Seminary. I think, if I ever get to heaven, one of the first things I shall do will be to search him out and thank him for it. Let me quote it for you. Perhaps it will help you as many a time it has been like summer, with all its soft airs and flowers and songs of birds, to me. "There arises from all parts of the world, at the morning and evening, and through the labors of the day, a perpetual incense of adoration and of petition ; it contains the sum of the deepest wants of the human race, in its fears and hopes, its anguish and thankfulness ; it is laden with sighs, with tears, with penitence, with faith, with submission ; the broken heart, the bruised spirit, the stifled murmur, the ardent hope, the haunting fear, the mother's darling wish, the child's simple prayer ; all the burdens of the soul, all wants and desires nowhere else uttered, meet to-

gether in that sound of many voices which ascends into the ears of the Lord God of hosts. And mingled with all these cravings and utterances is one other voice, one other prayer, their symphony, their melody, their accord, deeper than all these, tenderer than all these, mightier than all these—the tones of One who knows us better than we know ourselves, and who loves us better than we love ourselves, and who brings all these myriad, fragile petitions into one prevalent intercession, purified by his own holiness and the hallowing power of his work.”

I need not fear. I may pray on, even in my childish way, “in everything.” Even my meagre, ignorant, narrow-visioned prayer shall find safe, wise, loving, purifying lodgment in the intercession of him who ever liveth.

## XXIV

### A REVELATION TO THE SORROWFUL

**W**EALTHY with various revelation is the resurrection of our Lord. As the sun floods light every whither, so does the risen Christ stream affluent radiance, answer, certainty. See how his effulgence brightens sorrow. There is Marv of the swimming eyes

and the breaking heart, lingering about the emptied tomb. Let her stand as specimen of the sorrowful ; and mark how the risen Christ brings her the oil of joy for mourning, the garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

There is revelation for the sorrowful—that angels are at the behest of the risen Lord. There Mary sees them, those bright presences, keeping watch and ward where had lain the body of Jesus. What of angels? Things like these are told us of them : They are creations of God ; they are agents, voluntary and intelligent ; they are possessed of power and knowledge superhuman ; they are a great multitude ; they stand in the presence of God and worship him ; they execute the divine bidding ; they are charged with special ministry—are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation? And the revelation is that these radiant, helping spirits are under the mandate of the risen Christ.

There is real comfort here. Of the precise duty and mode of existence of these angels it is impossible that I get much conception, because their realm of being is so different from my own ; my meagre present experience cannot much interpret their function and entity. But it is surely a gracious certainty, especially

when sorrow darkens, that whatever energy of swift, strong service angels are charged with, it is all in instant obedience to the Christ who died for me, and who for my sake has risen from the dead. It is good to think that their assistance, whatever may be the kind and quality of it, is in the grasp, and for my sake, of that triumphant hand.

Also to Mary weeping here at the sepulchre there is revelation, and through her to the sorrowful to-day, that often that for which the sorrowful grieve most is benignantly the best.

My friend, there are two sides to things. There is the side of the weeping Mary ; the dead Christ, the bruised and buried body, the poor solace, so passionately longed for, of caring for the dead body to love's exacting limit, the awful disappointment of the unsealed tomb and the vanished corpse. At her then phase of experience she could not understand it. It was all horribly dark and inexplicable. Even though she had heard the Master speak great, prophetic words about his resurrection, she could not rightly interpret them. On her side, and as far as she had then gotten, it was irremediably desolate.

But there' is another side to things, the Lord's. On his side, how shining it all was and graciously bountiful and beautiful ! That



emptied tomb and vanished body meant, though at first Mary could not see it, the Master's utter subdual of death and all the defeated gloom the stupendous resurrection means.

My friend, you do not, cannot just now, see it all—that dark sorrow. There is the Lord's side of it. Some day you shall get on and up to behold his side. And then

The things we mourned for most,  
With lashes wet,

shall sparkle with the glory of the morning and stand arrayed in the beauty of an infinite and loving tenderness.

“She supposing him to be the gardener.” There is revelation here for the sorrowful. It is this, that Jesus is often very near us in our sorrow when we are ignorant of his nearness. Sometimes our eyes are holden, as Mary's were. I remember a period in my own life. It seemed to me things were as jagged as they well could be. I had lost all consciousness of Christ with me amid the craggy circumstances. I was utterly heartsick. I imagined Jesus had deserted me. But how plainly I see now that he was in all and through all, was arranging just the discipline I then needed. Veritably I could better spare many things from my

life than that sad yet educating season. Frequently he whom you think only the gardener is the Lord himself close to you, loving you fathomlessly, fitting you the more for his service here, his heaven yonder.

How surely also, in this experience of Mary, is there revelation for the sorrowful that Jesus has particular and personal knowledge of us in our sorrow.

## XXV

### THE REVELATION TO DISCOURAGEMENT

“**A**ND that night they caught nothing,” we are told of those seven disciples.

I think it likeliest that these seven disciples—Simon Peter, Thomas called Didymus, Nathanael of Cana, in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others, were waiting for that promised revelation of the risen Lord at the mountain in Galilee. In obedience to the risen Lord’s command these disciples had gone northward from Jerusalem, and tarrying for fuller instructions concerning the appointed mountain and the gathering to be held there, meanwhile found themselves on the shore of the familiar lake.

It is always better when you must wait, to wait doing something. If you must wait to do the thing you want to, meantime use your waiting in doing the next best thing, the thing you can.

When Napoleon had become chief ruler of France, and was carrying through that wonderful codification of the laws of France known as the Code Napoleon, some one asked him in surprise how he, a soldier, came to know so much of law. In reply he told how, in the hurly-burly of the revolution, he was imprisoned for a time, and had found in his prison a mutilated copy of the Pandects of Justinian, and had given the days of his imprisonment to a thorough mastery of it. Surely that was a better way of employing the time waiting for his release than in a listless and merely bewailing, hoping to get out.

I think Peter is to be much commended for that swift resolve, "I go a fishing," so using the time of waiting for the chief thing in doing something; and also that these disciples are to be much commended for their ready following his strenuous example.

And, by the way, heed how powerful a thing example is. Peter says, "I go." The rest immediately say, "We go." "He was the glass wherein the noble youth did dress themselves,"

says Shakespeare of one of his heroes. It is a great and gracious thing to be of such strong, true character yourself, that your example shall incite others upward, rather than suggest downward.

Many a night before, these disciples, setting forth on this lake of Galilee, had taken much. Fishing was for most of them their trade. They knew precisely how to cast their nets, and where, and the little lake was swarming too with fish.

But that night,—it was a night exceptional and different from many another preceding night of successful toil,—that night, though they diligently used their handicraft, though they searched all the places where they knew the fish were wont to gather, though they kept at it through all the weary, tantalizing hours until the breaking of the day, hoping against hope at every casting of the net and hard hauling of it—that night they caught nothing.

I think that very close to human life. There are, in life, periods of successful endeavor, longer or shorter. Then there come times of great failure and of sad discouragement. And these seasons come even when you apply the appropriate means, as these disciples did, sedulously casting and hauling the nets the long night through.

There are such seasons of discouragement in spiritual experience. How full the Psalms are of the plaint of such periods. "Lord, how are they increased that trouble me! Many are they that rise up against me. Many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God." "How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? for ever? How long wilt thou hide thy face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily?" And even though you ply the means as the disciples did; even though you read the Bible, pray, set yourself at the daily duty, attend upon the means of grace, you do not seem to get up and on, you catch nothing of the joy, peace, strength, vision of God, for which your soul is longing. You cannot honestly say it was always thus. Hitherto you have consciously achieved. You have grown in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord. But just now it seems otherwise to you. You seem to have lost ground. Failure baffles you. You are discouraged.

There are such times of discouragement in the training of children. You have seen your child developing in the direction of your wish and prayer. Your hope has brightened, your cup of thankfulness has been full. Then you somehow seem to have lost power over your

child. You mark tendencies emerging which distress you. You see habits forming which you are sure must be disastrous. And you find yourself in a measure helpless. Your child does not respond to your anxious and persistent attempt. You seem to yourself to catch nothing in the way of getting noble character substantiated in your child. Such discouragement is of the saddest sort.

There are such times of discouragement in Sunday-school teaching. How you *have* drawn your class to you, elicited interest, seen result. But now it is all dull and hard. The nets of your attempt come up empty. You seem to have lost power. You have almost determined to tell the superintendent he must release you and get another teacher for your class.

There are such times of discouragement amid the experiences of sorrow. "I am ambitionless, powerless, crushed, unwilling, and apparently unable to take up the work of life again. I am well-nigh hopeless of any more happiness on earth." Such was the wail which came to me once from one whom a sore sorrow had smitten.

That night, that exceptional, different night—how close it is to our human lives! If anybody should hail you amid your endeavor, as in the gray of the morning the seeming stranger

hailed these disciples from the shore, "Children, have ye aught to eat?" perhaps you would not think it wise to tell just how you felt, but if you answered according to your real heart you would only despairingly answer: "No; my most arduous attempt has come to nothing."

But here by the lake side, and to these worn and disheartened disciples, the risen Lord has revelation to such discouragement. It is a revelation of his knowledge of us, even though we do not think he knows. "But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore; but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus." The first thing the light discloses is the risen Lord on the shore there. The disciples do not know him, but he is there, knowing all about their toilful, baffling night.

Thou knowest, not alone as God all knowing,

As man, our mortal weakness thou hast proved;  
On earth with purest sympathies o'erflowing,

O Saviour, thou hast wept, and thou hast loved!  
And love and sorrow still to thee may come,  
And find a hiding-place, a rest, a home.

Also this revelation of the risen Lord to discouragement is the revelation of the necessity of obedience notwithstanding discouragement. "Cast your net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore."

Just what was commanded these disciples they did. I think it just here we so often fail. It is the peculiar temptation of discouragement to fail, just here, at the point of an exact obedience. We say, how often, "There is no use trying any more," and we give over trying, instead of obeying. But though, like these disciples, we are wet and cold and tired and clean gone in hope, the thing to do is to obey, as they did. More than ever amid discouragement, we should be scrupulous in obedience.

Also, this revelation of the risen Lord to discouragement, is the revelation of success upon obedience, notwithstanding discouragement. "They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes." Though the night was failure, the morning brought success. Such a morning is going to break for you. Think a moment. He is the *risen* Lord there upon the shore. He is shining with utmost triumph. He has defeated sin and death. All power is in his hand. And you, discouraged as you are, are yet trying to obey him. Do you think your night will never break into a glad day? It cannot but do it, since you have such a Lord.

Also, this revelation of the risen Lord to discouragement, is the revelation of the risen Lord's most thoughtful care for our necessities.



I do not know anything in all the range of Scripture more exquisite. Those disciples were wet, chilled, tired, hungry. But there, where the Lord stands, a fire burns, and fish is cooking and bread is provided. You shall find your fire and fish and bread, your supply for your needs. Your Lord is such a Lord of tender thoughtfulness.

Do you know, my friend, the best thing to do amid discouragement? It is this ; get vision of your Lord. Instead of bewailing and brooding and moping, read such record of your Lord as we have here been thinking of. And remember he is the same Lord. Whatever else changes he remains. And thus hope and purpose cannot help coming to you. I am only suggesting to you what I have tried myself.

## XXVI

### THE CHAMPION OF THE CHRISTIAN

**T**HIS is the question : Is the Christian confessing Christ, and standing for him, and seeking to put the feet of his life in Christ's footprints,—is the Christian who is bound to be unworldly, even though he be in a worldly world, who is bound to test things by other standards, to be impelled by other motives, to

submit to sacrifice when others rush into indulgence,—is the Christian, standing thus, to be left alone? Is there no champion for him?

I stood once in a most sad place. It was on one of the crests overlooking the fertile and beautiful valley of the Little Big Horn River. It was there where the gallant General Custer and his few brave and devoted followers met their death at the hands of that horde of Indians under Sitting Bull. I stood there not so long after the fatal battle but that the terrible *débris* of it—the scarcely buried bodies, the slain horses, the torn uniforms, the shattered arms, the barricades of dead horses behind which the men in vain sought safety, were all about me.

It was thus explained to me by one most competent. The horde of Indians, thousands strong, were encamped down in the valley of the river. General Custer divided his forces, giving the greater part of them to the command of another officer, instructing him to go down into some timber in the valley, and there engage the Indians, while he, with the remaining portion of the command, would march farther along the heights, descend into the valley from a point behind the Indians, and so strike them in the rear, while the rest of the command were engaging them in front.

This officer did as he was ordered, but did not stay there in the timber. When the Indians came at him he retreated, recrossed the river, climbed the hills, and on a hill entrenched himself and waited. On his retreat the whole throng of Indians turned back and set on General Custer and his few men. Nor did this officer come to his assistance. I detail the story as one most competent told it to me upon the ground.

I remember, as I rode over that awful battlefield, from the hill where this officer entrenched himself to the hill where General Custer met his death, I kept saying to myself: "Oh, if he had not let General Custer fight alone! oh, if he had but come to his assistance!"

This is the question: Must the Christian fight alone? Is there to be for him no assisting champion? Yes, there is a champion for the Christian. Consider his name. "But when the Comforter is come whom I will send," says our Lord. That is the name of the one who is ever to be the Christian's champion, the Comforter.

But get the true notion of comfort. Too often, with us, comfort means cushion, a restful, easy-going, dreamy somnolence—means the Lotos Land of which Tennyson sings:

There is music here that softer falls  
 Than petals from blown roses on the grass,  
 Or night dews on still waters between walls  
 Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass ;  
 Music that gentler on the spirit lies  
 Than tir'd eyelids upon tir'd eyes ;  
 Music that brings sweet sleep down from the bliss-  
     ful skies.

Here are cool mosses deep,  
 And through the moss the ivies creep.  
 And in the stream the long-leaved flowers weep,  
 And from the craggy ledge the poppy hangs in sleep.

But that is not the true idea of comfort, the idle dreaming in such a Lotus Land. Comfort is from *fortis*, which means strong, and from *con*, which means with one. And the true meaning of the Comforter is not one who shall lull you, but one who shall gird you, who shall be strong with you that you may be strong. This champion of the Christian, the Comforter, is he who is called to the Christian's side that he may endue the Christian, unworldly in this worldly world, with all needed power.

Consider whence comes this champion of the Christian. "But when the Comforter is come whom I will send unto you from the Father . . . which proceedeth from the Father," says our Lord. The Comforter thus sent by Christ, and thus proceeding from the Father, comes. There is no need of any difficult theo-

logical disquisition about the doctrine of the procession of the Spirit. But notice that there is here involved the great and precious fact of the Trinity, and that the whole triune God-head is here represented as engaged in the assistance of the Christian. The ascended Christ sends, from the side of the Father he proceeds, and thus sent and proceeding, the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, comes.

There are lonely hours. There are hours when life seems hardly worth the living. There are times when burdens seem to press with even unbearable heaviness, when the wearied and numbed hands seem scarcely able to keep their grasp upon life's tasks ; when all the heaven's blue has turned to gray, and the wounded foot can find no place to put itself along life's road that it shall not be the more sorely wounded by an added thorn ; when prayer seems to be but "wasted breath beaten back by the gale" ; when memories of brighter seasons haunt with their contrasts, and the future is filled with fears which will not down, and the present is desolate and bereft.

Dear heart, this is a message to you. However you may seem to yourself bereft, you are not bereft. In your hard struggle you are not left to fight alone. There is a legend of a battle in the old time, where, above those who

stood for the truth and right, squadrons of angels came to do aërial and assisting combat ; and a great picture has embalmed the legend. But here is not legend. Here is fact. As your champion there comes, better than angels, the puissant Holy Spirit.

Steadily but viewlessly is electricity at work in this world of ours. Wherever the electrician sets up his battery he can lay hold of the omnipresent force for his own special uses. Tell me, sometime when you have seemed most bestead, forlorn, uselessly praying, have you not noted in your mood a strange, fresh change ? Have you not felt courage coming back, hope kindling, strength returning, and seen through the gray of the heavens the cheerful blue forth-breaking ? You could not explain your change of mood. You could not put your finger on this or that reason for it. But I can give you explanation. You had set up the battery of what you thought your useless prayer and the Holy Spirit, who is the omnipresent Christ, had come to you, your champion, your internal and most gracious helper.

Believe, then, in the champion. *Credo Spiritum Sanctum*—I believe in the Holy Spirit ; let that be a most vital article in your creed. Expect his aid. You are not alone. You have

an infinite ally. The battle shall not go against you. Yonder shines the sure, eternal triumph.

## XXVII

## THE INNER HELPER

WALKING in the woods, once on a time,  
I saw lying at my feet a nut, ripened,  
and fallen from a tree near-by.

I picked up the nut and discovered that it was uninjured by worm or bite of squirrel. It is too bad, I said within myself, that this nut should not have a chance. So I made a hole for it with my walking-stick, and rolled it into the hole, and covered it with earth, and so gave the nut opportunity to push itself downward into roots and upward into a beginning tree.

Then I fell to thinking. That nut, I thought within myself, is the finished product of all the processes of the summer. But, though it be thus a finished product, God has not yet finished with the nut. In that nut there are latent possibilities. There is the germ within it; there are cotyledons within it; there are appetencies forth-reaching in it. That nut holds within itself a mighty tree.

Then I bethought me of the various and

strong helps God had furnished for that nut, and which were and would be lying about it that it might become a tree. The soil—that was help for it with its various sustenance. The air—that was help for it with its interminglings of carbonic acid gas. The wet—that was help for it with its moisture. The winds—they would be help for it, drifting to it multiplied nutriment, and by their buffetings compacting the growing tree. The winter snows—they would be help for it, folding the nut in as with a blanket, and so protecting it against the piercings of the frost. The spring sun—that would be help for it, as its rays searched it out and stirred it into growth. And the dark too—that would be help for it, with its rest, with its sleep, and with its dews.

Then I meditated further, and said to myself, let the nut teach me of higher matters.

When God makes a Christian by justification and adoption through Jesus Christ, when God has put the penitent and believing soul back into sonhood, then God has not finished with that Christian. We are apt to think God has. We are apt to limit the divine interventions to the threshold and beginnings of the Christian life. We are too apt to imagine that the Christian soul, commencing to be Christian, must struggle on wearily of itself, through the



processes and up into the maturings of the Christian life ; that God, who has so much to do with the making of a Christian, has comparatively little to do with his development. And, right then, the nut, with all the helps furnished it to become a tree, began to teach me better. I began to find that that small nut was getting to be a kind of door of entrance for me into a great Scripture like this : “ And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son ; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”

“ And because ye are sons ”—mark that. Just because, through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ, you have become, in the truest and deepest of senses, a son of God, God has not finished with you any more than he has finished with that nut which, getting to be a nut, all the helps of the winters and the springs and the summers and the autumns of all the years shall gather around it that it may become a tree. Because ye are sons, God comes with all the maturing assistances of the Spirit of his Son, the inner helper. Notice where this inner helper helps. “ God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts.” That is the region where this inner helper helps.

Such is evermore the method of Christianity. It is an inner method. Get the heart right, the thinking, loving, willing of the man, and you have gotten the man himself right. We hear a great deal about environment as a helping force in these days of ours. And it is such force, only it is largely a force external, not much touching the deep springs of being. But the help of this inner helper goes to the bottom of the need. He is sent forth into our hearts.

What does this inner helper do in our hearts? Multitudes of helpful ministries, like these : He convicts of sin, regenerates, sanctifies, renews, anoints, comforts, teaches, leads, witnesses with our spirits, seals,—puts the stamp of God upon us as the seal puts its configuration on the wax,—illuminates, intercedes, indwells, strives, imparts power, gives the feeling of sonship whereby we cry Abba, Father. Faber sings truly,

God is never so far off  
As even to be near.  
He is within, our spirit is  
The home he holds most dear.

To think of him as by our side,  
Is almost as untrue  
As to remove his throne beyond  
Those skies of starry blue.

So all the while I thought myself  
Homeless, forlorn, and weary,  
Missing my joy, I walked the earth  
Myself God's sanctuary.

Why are we not more helped and better Christians? Because we will not let this inner helper have all his beneficent and gracious way within ourselves.

## XXVIII

### THE TRUE WAY OF TRIUMPH

AS the story goes, when the Greeks returned from Troy, they must sail by the island of the Sirens. As their bewitching strains began to salute the ears of the passing Greeks, the voyagers were caught with intense desire to fling themselves overboard and swim to the Sirens. But thus they would have been engulfed and drowned—and this was what the treacherous singers wanted. Then Odysseus compelled the Greeks to stuff their ears with wax, that they might not hear the Sirens, though all the time they wanted to. And thus the Greeks sailed safely by.

But when the Argonauts sailed by that same island of the soliciting tempters, and the Sirens began to ply their music, Orpheus caught up

his lyre, and so filled the air with a better melody than the Sirens could possibly sing, that the Argonauts, ravished with the nobler music, did not care for the Sirens' songs, and sailed by, not simply safely, but triumphantly and with unstopped ears.

Do you not see that this latter way of triumph was vastly loftier and more vanquishing, because it killed the appetency?

This is the way the Holy Spirit would have us triumph. Says the apostle: "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." Make belief in the Holy Spirit a vital article of your creed.

There is a Holy Spirit. God is not distant, yonder in some far-off heaven, "a kind of absentee God, sitting on the outside of his universe, and seeing it go." God is with us.

Speak to him, then, for he hears,  
And Spirit with spirit may meet;  
Closer is he than breathing,  
And nearer than hands and feet.

Open your heart to God, give him residence, chance, room, and he, within you, shall work wonders. He will ravish you with a better music. More than that, he will so change and rearrange your nature that you shall love what God loves, and hate what God hates. You

shall know the meaning of that great word of St. Augustine, "Love God, and do what you please." By the ministry and power of the Spirit you shall be brought into such love to God that you shall not want to do but what pleases him. So passion shall be quieted, and evil thoughts get no room, and doubts be quenched, and bad habits cease to fascinate and thrall, and religious laggardness give place to glorious liberty.

If you want blooms in winter you must force them in a hothouse. But when June comes flowers spring everywhere for you spontaneously. The entrance into a man of the Divine Spirit is God's June for him. Then everything is easy. Then is he nobly delivered from guarded and hot-house constraint. This is the true way of triumph—not that of a hard repression, but that of a beautiful and gracious freedom which settles itself naturally into the right and good.

## XXIX

### GLORIFYING GOD

I HAVE frequently asked people, in social religious meetings, what they thought was meant by the so frequent Scripture injunction

that we glorify God. I do not just now remember that I ever got a quick and clear answer to the question. People had a kind of hazy notion about it. But we should have a definite notion. Let us attempt to gain it.

For example, our Lord says: "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit." Our question is, How can the Christian by his fruit-bearing glorify God? Already God shines with a glory limitless. How can any fruit-bearing of mine add to a glory already infinite? How can you add anything to an over-brimming fullness?

But when we are exhorted in Scripture to glorify God, it does not mean that we are to attempt to add to, or to imagine that we can add to, the already sumless glory of the infinite God. It means that we are to display his glory, to become the surfaces, so to speak, striking on which it shall go reflected forth.

The wavelet cannot add to the glory of the sun, but it can so catch and scatter the sunlight that the benign radiance shall seem more beautiful. The flash of the diamond does not make the sun more luminous, but opening its clear heart to the entrance of the sunbeam, it does so fling it out that you have a new joy in the sun's effulgence.

She was not a very pleasant member of the

family. She was fretful, complaining, irritating, set on a ministry of uncomfortableness. They sent her away to boarding-school. It was a good riddance. But there the Lord met her and she became a genuine Christian. Getting home, she was seen to be another person ; patient, cheerful, kind, beautiful, with a steady service of usefulness. A skeptical cousin looked at her askance for some time, attributing the change to any reason but the right one, and sure the old unpleasantness would soon display itself. But it did not. So he asked her the cause of the transformation. The reply was, that the grace of God had given her another sort of heart. He said to himself, "I don't believe that God has anything to do with it, though she thinks he had," and he set himself to trying to be as good as she. But where she all the time succeeded, he failed ; until at last, certain she had some help he missed, and giving his skepticism to the winds, he sought and found what new heart and power of continuance had come to her.

I am sure you can see plainly that, while that Christian maiden did not add to the measureless sum of God's glory, she did manifest forth and commend his glory, and so did in the most real way, in the precise way in which the Scripture means, glorify God.

## XXX

## JESUS IN HIS NAZARETH HOME

DO not too much glorify it in your imagination. Nazareth was a common town, lying in a fold among the hills which close on the north the plain of Æsdrælon, and not held in high repute. It was filled with common houses ; you can see such there to-day, just cubes of stone without exterior or interior elegance. Perhaps—I do not know—it may have been one of the poorest houses in the town. At any rate, a carpenter's family inhabited it ; the family of a man who was hard-handed and must toil for a living. It was in such a home that the consummate flower of humanity unfolded itself.

But few glints break through the obscurity of the life of Jesus in this home in Nazareth. But what glints do are inestimably precious and shiningly suggestive.

First glint. "And the child grew," as St. Luke tells us. Jesus submitted to the law of a progressive development. That is a most important lesson for us in this restless, rapid, impatient age. Think of it, Christ had come ! The angels had sung his coming. The world was waiting for him, dying for him. It would



seem that if there ever were need for immediateness, for the quick seizure of the life-work, it was here. But God is wiser. He had ordained the law of an advancing and time-consuming growth. To that law, as the perfect human example, Christ submitted. For how long? For thirty years. No hot rushing into the work of life, no hasty thrusting of the burdens of maturity upon immaturity. We look too much comparatively at the consummation, and forget the hidden, patient, careful gathering of life, experience, force, which made the consummation possible.

“And the child grew,” and had time for growth. How often are children thrust into fashionable manhood and womanhood before they have begun to be men and women. Pushed from the seclusion of childhood into the glare of a fashionable publicity, tightly laced, thinly dressed, robbed of sleep, burned out by excitement, with physical vigor largely consumed before the time of youth has sped, there is little left in them upon which manhood and womanhood can draw; they are old, though young. As over against this feverish, impoverishing haste, what depth of reserved quiet can you not hear in these words about the Holy Child, “And the child grew.”

What rebuke here also to the common ten-

dency to superficiality. Too great swiftness of early life is invincibly hostile to depth and thoroughness. The true motto for life is : Not many things, but much ; not a thousand things glanced at and forgotten, but a few things known and held ; not a little gilding of knowledge sprinkled over a thousand ignorances, but some things so studied and understood that the gold of knowledge reaches to the innermost center of the thing.

There is rebuke here also, in this fact of the growth of Jesus, to an undue precocity. Jesus, as child, was perfect child. Childhood did not thrust itself forward into manhood. When Christ was child, he was perfectly what the state of childhood required him to be. Precocity is monstrosity. Childhood for childhood, manhood for manhood ; that is the law. We do not want womanly girls and manly boys. We want girlish girls and boyish boys. We do not want boy preachers and child orators and infant prodigies, and people with finished educations at eighteen. We want children in the time of childhood, and youths in the time of youthhood, that we may have full, strong, rounded men and women in the time of maturity.

Second glint. He "waxed strong in spirit," St. Luke further tells us. He gathered acces-

sions of spiritual strength. Strength of spirit is strength of will. Through all these silent years the holy will of Christ was never overcome. It withstood each temptation ; it vanquished every obstacle. Thus resisting, and conquering, and so gaining strength through successive steps, the holy will of Jesus waxed strong. Through the silent years of this home in Nazareth was slowly compacting that invincible resolution which carried the Saviour to the "It is finished" of the cross.

The great thing our children need is this strength of spirit, this waxing of moral will. How many times is the fullness of the promise blighted and beggared by meanness of moral will. Look at Coleridge. How prodigal was providence of gifts to him, yet how small was the comparative return ! Gigantic in projecting, lilliputian, comparatively, in executing, his was but the splendid fragment of a life, at best. The reason ? He did not wax strong in spirit. Seek you, for your child, this waxing of will toward righteousness and achievement. Do not try to break your child's will ; you break him if you do that. Teach him, rather, to set his will toward high and pure resolve, and so furnish him for life's conflict.

Third glint. He was becoming "filled with wisdom," St. Luke further tells us. Wisdom

is the noblest result of training. Wisdom is not knowledge, any more than the use of a faculty is the faculty itself. Wisdom is the ordering of knowledge toward a given end.

Wisdom and knowledge, far from being one,  
Have oftentimes no connection. Knowledge dwells  
In heads replete with thoughts of other men,  
Wisdom in heads attentive to their own ;  
Knowledge is an unprofitable mass,  
The mere materials with which wisdom builds.

I was in a foundry. There was rude pig-iron lying about. There were also molds of various parts of engines. The rude, unmolded iron was nothing worth for any function in an engine. It could play no part in its crude state. It must first be thrown into the furnace, and then be run into the mold, before it could become valuable as a portion of an engine. Its value was potential only, unmolded. It was real, molded. That unmanufactured iron is knowledge. That iron melted, shaped, organized to an end, is wisdom. The wonderful wisdom of Jesus was the issue of the silent years in the home in Nazareth. What suggestion here toward the training of our children into a high efficiency ; into the transmuting of knowledge and experience into wisdom.

Fourth glint. "And the grace of God was upon him," St. Luke further tells us. There

can be no worthwhile growth except it be growth into the grace of God. Without the grace of God, there is even a kind of doom in growth, for it is growth away from God. Without the grace of God, waxing strong in spirit is but gaining in strength of purpose against God. Without the grace of God, the wisdom we get is only the shifty, dexterous, ignoble time-serving of this poor world. The grace of God—that is our mightiest need, for ourselves, for our children.

Fifth glint. “And was subject unto them,” St. Luke in addition tells us. There was parental rule and law in that home in Nazareth, and Jesus came under them. In him there was no wild breaking from restraint and right subjection. I am sure too, there was wise and loving parenthood in that home. “He rules the house,” they told me of a boisterous and forward and petted child. Bad symptom, bad prophecy for life! Father and mother under the child, not the child under them. But the Perfect Child was under rule. Homes are only rightly organized when parents are lovingly but really atop.

Sixth glint. “Is not this the carpenter?” St. Mark tells us the people asked, smitten with wonder at him, when he assumed his public ministry. So Jesus, when the time came

for it, set his hand to the hard, daily toil. So he put a crown on labor, on the doing the common tasks the days bring. We can only do larger work for the Father in the future as we are faithful in doing smaller work for him in the present. It was Jesus, faithful to the Father's business in the carpenter's shop, who was faithful to the Father's business in the public ministry and on the cross. It is the faithful doing of what is small that shall lead us into the capacity and possibility of doing what is great.

### XXXI

#### A SUCCESSFUL COURTSHIP

A SUCCESSFUL courtship is one that issues in a successful marriage.

For there may be a marriage that falls far below the real and high ideal of it, and yet is a marriage. The feet of it never reach the loftier heights; they rather drag themselves, perhaps painfully, perhaps with a dull and unhoping listlessness, amid the dust and mists and commonplaces of the lower levels. There are marriages and marriages. There are matches merely, and not matings. There are companionships without comradeships. There are

those that have said together the irrevocable words, who somehow find that the utter fullness of the heart has not gone with the binding words. There are those that are one, yet have stayed sadly two ; hearts are pitched in different keys, and though there is no special jangling, there is the missing of the perfect chime.

If people find themselves, in any wise, in such a marriage, in no place in the wide world are the grace and graciousness of Christ more needed. There ought to be between two such the most sedulous and steady attempt and purpose to gain a real mating. There ought to be the religious and persistent holding to all sweet courtesies. There ought to be the most vigorous resolve to grow toward and into each other. There ought to be the incessant cultivating, and at any cost, of all intimate sympathies. He ought to bring himself to her likings, and she to his. So a real comradeship may come, and should, at any hazard, be made to come. Thus a marriage that began in a mere matching may issue, and ought to issue, and certainly can issue, in a mating of souls, as two instruments of music are mated when they are perfectly attuned.

But I am thinking of courtship and not of marriage, of the vestibule to the temple of the home rather than of the temple itself. A

courtship is in the truest meaning successful when it so discloses nature to nature and heart to heart, and declares two so cordially fitted to each other, that, without special wrench and strain, marriage becomes the spontaneous, beautiful, utterly satisfying and fragrant bloom of the whole courtship.

Ask yourself then, very carefully, prayerfully, in the deepest sense religiously,—for it is a very mighty and making or marring matter to which just now, O my courting friend, you are giving thought,—ask yourself, as if your life depended on the answer,—and it verily does, as it hangs on scarcely another answer,—ask yourself, “Do I unhesitatingly believe that she is precisely fitted to be the wife for me?”

That is by no means a selfish question. That is a question in which is wrapped her weal as much as yours. I think it sheathes her weal even more than it can yours. For, forevermore a woman risks in marriage beyond that which a man does, or ever can. For a man marriage is a critical circumstance, but for a woman it is unspeakably momentous. A man has other things with which to fill his hands and time; his business, the struggle of the daily life, the necessary mingling with the great world. If home fails him, it is a failure



terribly sad, but perhaps not so tragically sad as if the home fails her. For she leaves everything, O my courting friend, if you persuade her to marry you. She must find her whole life and home with you. You bid her lay off, for your sake, the dear paternal name. You bid her cut herself away, as no man can cut himself apart, from old associations. You call her to risk her entire self in a devotion sacredly and awfully measureless, and come to you.

Ah, my friend, a thing like that is not a thing to be asked without utmost care and forethought, is not a thing to be asked unless you are as sure of yourself as sure can be, sure that you utterly love her, that to you, of all women, she is queen, that there is no draft she can possibly make hereafter on your affection that you will not rejoice instantly and lavishly to meet.

Mr. Ruskin says,—and I think his words ought to be most heedfully regarded by any man fascinated at some first sight, and beginning to be deliciously snared in the tremors, endeavors, hope, longings, of what we know as courting,—Mr. Ruskin says, speaking to young women :

“What do you think the beautiful word, ‘wife,’ comes from? It is the great word with which the English and Latin languages

conquered the French and Greek. I hope the French will some day get a word for it instead of that of *femme*. But what do you think it comes from? The great value of the Saxon words is that they mean something. Wife means 'weaver.' You must either be housewives or house-moths, remember that. In the deep sense, you must either weave men's fortunes and embroider them, or feed upon and bring them to decay. Wherever a true wife comes, home is always around her. The stars may be over her head, the glow-worm in the night's cold grass may be the fire at her feet; but home is where she is, and for a noble woman it stretches far around her, better than houses ceiled with cedar, or painted with vermilion, shedding its quiet light for those who else are homeless."

Well, does she seem to be that sort of woman to you? Is she such a beautiful and lovely and loving "weaver"? Do you think her head and hand and heart will be deft and glad at such weaving? Are you sure of it? Are you getting more sure of it every time you see and talk with her? That is the chance of courtship and the deep meaning of it, that you get sure of it.

Then, O my sister courted, have you thought well what "husband" means? You for whom

the decision of the question is so unutterably serious ; you, nested now in the paternal home, and yet astir with such tremulous impulse toward a new home that you tenderly dream of calling in such dear and new significance your own, and with him—do you know, have you thought well, what “husband” means?

“It is a pretty word ; the house-band that ties all together ; is not that the meaning?” Yes ; that is the meaning, and it is a word more than pretty ; it is a word great and grave and gracious and noble also.

But is he, this young man that is courting you, likely, think you, to be that sort of a man for you ? Is he honorable and pure and strong and tender enough to be all that the great word “husband” means to you ? Are you sure of it ? Are you as sure of it as you can be of anything ? Does your heart tell you, when you are alone with yourself and thinking and his image rises before you, does your heart tell you, and with no quavering about the answer when you interrogate it, “Yes, I am sure that the band of his love and of his protection is the band that I want to have bound about me for my whole life long” ?

I think a successful courtship is one that really discloses to each such things as these,

which makes and means a deep and sacred acquaintanceship, which shows each heart that its real rest, resource, satisfying refuge, is in the heart of the other. A successful courtship is a courtship that lays open to each such fitness for marriage before marriage. After such a courtship marriage is the safest, most royal, noblest, of all things. In the marriage issuing from such courtship there shall not be

The little rift within the lute,  
That by and by will make the music mute,  
And, ever widening, slowly silence all.  
The little rift within the lover's lute,  
Or little pitted speck in garnered fruit,  
That, rotting inward, slowly moulders all.

Therefore, generally speaking, I think that is most likely to be a successful courtship, in the great sense of success that I have been urging, which is not a hurried or impulsive one. Usually the best courtship is the one that gives chance for the most thorough acquaintance before marriage.

I need scarcely say, in view of all that I have been saying, that the most successful courtship will be a religious courtship, a courtship in which hearts find themselves religiously at one. The best place in which to make a marriage is at the foot of the cross of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, with the spirit stream-

ing from that cross flooding and interpenetrating. At Christ's cross is the best place to do every worthy deed in this world.

I beseech you, dear young friends of mine, if your courtship, bringing, as I am sure it ought, better acquaintance, discloses, on the whole, to both or to either one of you, an increasing unlikeness of each to each instead of an increasing and more trustful likeness, then, I beseech you, stop your courting. Even if your courting has gone on into engagement, stop your courting and break your engagement. Do not let any false pride hinder you. Be true. Be true. Be true to each other and to yourself. It is infinitely better to be sorry before marriage than to be sorry after marriage and because of it.

Never marry either simply for the sake of marrying or to reform somebody. True words these that some one else has spoken :

“The truest wedded life can only come out of the truest unwedded life. It is blank folly to imagine that a woman who has had half a dozen ‘affairs of the heart,’ as they are called, can wed a man who has sown his wild oats and make a happy match of it. ‘Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? Who shall abide in his holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart, who hath

not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.' You say that means the merchant and the politician, and the man and the woman who would experience religion in the purest and loftiest sense. I say it means fitness for a true wedding as certainly as any other thing we can think of. There is no reach in our life in which these great first things can be more essential, either for this world or the world to come. You say it is seeing life. I say it is seeing death. It is building a closet to hold a skeleton in the holy of holies."

God bless you in your courting, dear young people. Be sure there can be no successful courtship or resulting marriage either that does not have God's blessing. But with his blessing and your own truth to yourself and to each other, your courting and marrying may seem as if a fragment of heaven's glory had fallen down and broken, shining, upon your heads.

## XXXII

### WHAT THE BIBLE HAS OF CHEER AND HOPE FOR THE AGED

I WAS sitting by my mother not so very long ago. She was far on in life, looking through almost the last of its westward win-

dows. The disease of which she died, a lingering and painful one, had already captured the outposts of her health, and the waning vitality which age brings could not strongly summon itself for resistance. That day—it was a passing day amid a journey when I had skipped some trains to see her—it seemed to my anxiety that she was weak unwontedly. I plainly saw fresh ravages of age and sickness. I was noting the thinness of her hand, the kind of dead whiteness of her rippling hair, that used to curl in beautiful brown luxuriance about her face when I was a boy, the uncertainty of movement in her who had been to me the impersonation of elastic, direct vigor. There was a great and rebellious pain in me as I marked these things, and I burst out, “Mother, I don’t like this growing old.”

It seemed to me I never heard anything so beautiful as the music of her answer. There was such submission in it, and yet such tremorless faith, and even a kind of subdued jubilation, as though she had no complaint nor even any backward-pulling wish ; and at the same time a light as of a soft trust fell upon her face as she simply replied, “But we have to, my boy.” It was the way she said it, the sweet, gracious, Christian way, as though she were a child whose hand was surely grasped by

the great Father as she was going on into age and death, that made such impression on me. I rarely saw her after till I saw her body in the coffin. It was my mother's swan-song to me.

What my mother said is sternly true :

“But we have to grow old, my boy.”

If we live long enough, the most vigorous of us must in time become conscious that the years have drained his strength, that the keepers of the house tremble, that those that look out of the windows are darkened.

As I write a book of daily devotion lies before me. Opening to its fly-leaves I find such sentences as these written on them by the hand of my aged father, who, since my mother's death, has exchanged his age for the eternal youth of heaven :

“This manual of devotion was daily used for years in the evening of her life ; this book, and also her Bible, were called for by her every morning, and kept within her reach through the day.”

Well, I think I can do nothing better than to open this manual of devotion and note a few of the Scripture passages my mother's failing eyes fell on as the days went, and the teachings and disclosures of which made the evening of her life as restful and as radiant as when the sun sinks beneath a June horizon.



“ I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day.” “ He that watereth shall be watered.” “ My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.” “ Occupy till I come.”

There is sometimes a sad giving up and letting go in age. More than needfully the hands loosen grasp upon the daily duty ; more than wisely, interest in what of works or pleasure or intercourse the days bring is allowed to lessen ; more than should be, those who have been in the van of endeavor drop altogether from the ranks, or too easily allow themselves to be relegated to the straggling rear. Of course this, in a measure, must be. But there is a truth of proportion. It ought not to be more than it must be. And I think there should be steady determination that that “ must ” be as little imperious as possible.

I have in mind now a dear and genial old gentleman ; yet you would think him almost a boy for the kindly, glad heart in him. He has known great sorrows. He is left, in his old age, quite alone ; his immediate family are all dead, or have built other and distant homes. But to meet him is a day in May instead of in December. Dear old gentleman ! how my heart warms to him as I write, thinking of him. He is keeping at such duty as he can do, and

he can do much, as manfully as when he was at the noon of his strength. The children flock to him as the birds do to the summer, and he is as gracious to them as the summer is to the birds. His interest in passing things he will not let lose edge ; he is baffling age ; better than that, he is proving how nobly and royally *young* age can be. Life is correspondence with environment. The larger the environment the richer the life. This one of whom I write is living, even amid the frosts of age, so richly and so broadly because, with heroic and trustful faith, he is keeping himself in contact with rich and various environment.

And in this way my mother's old age was beautiful and beneficent. She would occupy *till* her Lord called. She would *finish* his work. While the day lasted she would work the works the Lord set next even her failing hands.

Age is opportunity no less  
Than youth itself, though in another dress.

“My times are in thy hand.” “Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you.” These passages, and especially in her later years, were mighty nourishers of my mother's enlarging faith. As age weakened her faith augmented. But faith must have an object on which it can lay hold. The way to increase

faith is to bid it get stronger grip on somewhat. That somewhat upon which my aged mother's faith laid steadily more grappling grasp were such Scripture passages as these. So her faith, amid her age, was like a growing tree, heightening, broadening. Do you know that exquisite setting to music, that first Scripture, "My times are in thy hands," by Miss War-  
ing? It was one of my mother's favorites.

Father, I know that all my life  
Is portioned out for me ;  
And the changes that are sure to come  
I do not fear to see ;  
But I ask thee for a present mind  
*Intent* on pleasing thee.

And that other passage, "Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you," is singularly significant. That first word "care" is our human word for it. It means literally, that which distracts, prevents wholeness of attention, and so joyfulness and precision of duty ; that which scares and damages and defeats ; that which pulls irregularly in two directions ; that which cuts to pieces and ravel into shreds. But that second word translated "care" is an altogether different one. It is the word for the divine thoughtfulness. It means a deep, loving, solicitous, infinitely intelligent concern for you. And the way

to get rid of our human anxiousness is to cast everything over on to the divine, loving, personal concern. This my mother increasingly did as the years added to their numbers, so her old age was increasingly serene and restful.

“The spirit shall return unto God who gave it.” “Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. . . We are confident and willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.” “With Christ, which is far better.”

When his age was eighty years John Quincy Adams was met on the streets of Boston by an old friend, who, taking his trembling hand, said : “Good-morning ! And how is John Quincy Adams to-day ?” “Thank you,” the ex-president replied, “John Quincy Adams himself is well, sir ; quite well, I thank you. But the house in which he lives at present is becoming dilapidated. It is tottering upon its foundation. Time and the seasons have nearly destroyed it. Its roof is pretty well worn out. Its walls are much shattered, and it trembles with every wind. The old tenement is becoming almost uninhabitable, and I think John Quincy Adams will have to move out of it soon ; but he himself is quite well, sir, quite well.”

Such was my mother's certainty. She was utterly persuaded that it was not she herself that was aging and sickening, but simply her body in which for the time was dwelling her real and essential self. She was sure of the sharpest sort of contrast between her spirit and the material enswathement of it. It was this last which was feeble and aged, not in the least her soul, herself. So she looked forward with keen anticipation to that other life to which, while the years were aging her, they were at the same time bringing her nearer, that other, grander, eternal life, the best, brightest, most alluring symbol of which is "with Christ, which is far better." So her age, instead of clouding her, brightened her. There was wistful and thrilling expectancy in it. As one about embarking for another land wonders of its new experiences, so she, soon to be from home as to the body, awaited with longing and yet restful and holy eagerness the being at home with the Lord.

I think there is no certainty the aged should more steadily cherish and rejoice in than this, that the failing tabernacle is but the failing tabernacle ; that the real self is in nowise itself aging, nor can possibly, albeit it is finding itself hindered in various expression by the failing tabernacle, as a broken instrument hinders

the musician ; that paradise, disimprisonment from the failing body, is youth, vigor, unwearyed delight and service and development.

“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil : for thou art with me.” Strikingly was this Scripture, over which in her last years my mother trustingly brooded, fulfilled to her when the time of her change came. She was so far gone she could no longer whisper or even move her lips ; she was so weak she could not lift a finger, when suddenly just at the last moment, a radiance like a shred of heaven’s glory fell upon her face ; she sat up in her bed, she reached out her arms, her eyes seemed entranced with delight and wonder ; and she who just now could not move herself or speak a word, exclaimed in full, strong voice, “Come, Lord Jesus !” and falling back was gone. He who had promised to be with her was with her. She did not pass through the strange way alone !

### XXXIII

#### IMMORTALITY

THAT is a brave poem of Robert Browning’s entitled “Prospice” :

Fear death !—to feel the fog in my throat,  
     The mist in my face,  
 When the snows begin, and the blasts denote  
     I am nearing the place,  
 The power of the night, the press of the storm,  
     The post of the foe ;  
 Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible form,  
     Yet the strong man must go ;  
 For the journey is done and the summit attained,  
     And the barriers fall,  
 Tho' a battle's to fight ere the guerdon be gained,  
     The reward of it all.  
 I was ever a fighter, so—one fight more,  
     The best and the last !  
 I would hate that death bandaged my eyes, and fore-  
     bore,  
     And bade me creep past.  
 No ! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers,  
     The heroes of old,  
 Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life's arrears  
     Of pain, darkness, and cold.  
 For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,  
     The black minute's at end,  
 And the elements' rage, the fiend-voices that rave  
     Shall dwindle, shall blend,  
 Shall change, shall become first a peace, then a joy,  
     Then a light, then thy breast,  
 Oh, thou soul of my soul ! I shall clasp thee again,  
     And with God be the rest !

Yes, it is a brave poem. But it is plain to  
 see that its ring of bravery is a dauntless faith  
 in immortality notwithstanding death. Such  
 brave notes could not possibly be struck were

it true that death not only slew the body, but also quenched the soul.

Who has not been conscious of this longing of one of the loftiest rulers of our modern thought?

“Oh, if this life were all that I could have, I should weep, it seems to me, from the present hour to the very end, unless I could say, as the ancients did, ‘Let us eat, drink, and be merry. To-morrow we die, so let us make the best of the little time that is left us.’ I should be in a state of wanton, merry despair, on the one side, or of tearful, sad despair on the other side. I must live again. I must make the experiment of life once more. I have made poor work here, but I have met with just success enough to feel that if I had a better chance I could do something. I am like a man that takes the first canvas to paint a picture. He does not know what he will do. He lays in forms in all sorts of ways without coming to any satisfactory result. At last he says: ‘I cannot make anything of that picture, but I have a conception. Bring me a fresh canvas and I will try again, when I think I shall have better success.’ I have long been trying to paint a true life and have only partially succeeded, but if God Almighty will give me another canvas, I think I can paint better.”



Well, what reasons are there for believing in the immortality of the soul? Let us for a little marshal our reasons.

There is the reason historical. By this is meant that through all the ages of history man has perpetually and persistently believed in his immortality. When you think of it, you will discover that nothing can be more surprising than this indomitable belief, for than death nothing is more ruthless and universal. Take John Stuart Mills' terrific arraignment of nature :

“Nature impales men, breaks them as if on the wheel, casts them to be devoured by wild beasts, burns them to death, crushes them with stones, like the first Christian martyrs, starves them with hunger, freezes them with cold, poisons them by the quick or slow venom of her exhalations, and has hundreds of other hideous deaths in reserve.”

That is true. Nature means death to every man sooner or later. That, notwithstanding the certainty and varied forms of death, men should have, generally speaking, always had, a kind of inevitable conviction that they should yet live elsewhere is most surprising, is most noteworthy. Can such rooted conviction mean a cheat, a phantasm?

There is the reason based upon the general

indestructibility of things. The soul is immaterial. The soul is intricate with matter, but it is not matter. You cannot express the facts of soul in the terms of matter. Says Mr. Tyndall :

“The passage from the physics of the brain to the corresponding facts of consciousness is unthinkable. Granted that a definite thought and a definite molecular action in the brain occur simultaneously ; we do not possess the intellectual organ, nor apparently any rudiment of the organ which would enable us to pass, by a process of reason, from the one phenomenon to the other.”

Says Prof. John Fiske :

“Nothing could be more grossly unscientific than the famous remark of Cabanis, that the brain secretes thought as the liver secretes bile. It is not even correct to say that thought goes on in the brain. What goes on in the brain is an amazingly complex series of molecular movements, with which thought and feeling are in some unknown way correlated, not as effects or as causes, but as concomitants.”

But now matter is indestructible ; it changes form, but it remains in atomic structure. Certainly if analogy ever points to anything, it points steadily to the fact that the wonderful soul which informs and directs matter must be,

at least, as lasting as the matter which is its servant. If you say this argument involves also the immortality of animals, I reply, let it ; what if it does? But to me this analogical argument is very strong : indestructible matter ; soul other than and nobler than matter ; therefore, indestructible, immortal soul.

There is the reason based upon our manifest present incompleteness. Oh, when a man has apparently reached the utmost point of development here ; when he has weighed the stars in the balances of his formulæ ; when he has snatched his secrets from the flaming guardian-ship of the sun ; when he has achieved the loftiest character ; when he has met and mastered obstacle—even at his highest point, how little he knows, how fragmentary he is.

Then still the heart a far-off glory sees,  
Strange music hears ;  
A something not of earth still haunts the breeze,  
The sun and spheres.

All things that be, all love, all thought, all joy,  
Sky, cloud, and star,  
Spell-bind the man, as once the growing boy,  
And point afar.

Point to some world of endless, endless truth,  
Of life and light,  
Where souls, renewed in an immortal youth,  
Shall know the infinite.

There is the reason based upon the persistence and continuity of our personality. \* Walking about the old home of my boyhood some time since, at once the laws of association began to cause to emerge within my consciousness a hundred forgotten things. But of this I was certain, with the granitic certainty of consciousness, that I was the same person who had been a boy amid those scenes. I was changed indeed by growth and various study and experience, but only as the oak is changed from the slight shoot beginning to lift itself amid the dried leaves and under the forest shade to the same oak full grown. Meantime, how had my body changed? I did not even stand in the same body I stood in when a boy. The particles of matter going to form that had drifted away and been altogether replaced by other particles. This had taken place many times between the period of my boyhood and that of my manhood. But I myself, consciously the same self, had persisted through all the ever overturning changes. So I shall persist through the last change, which we call death. I think this argument very strong. Since the soul persists through gradual changes as revolutionary as the change of death itself, is it to be supposed that the sudden change of death is to annihilate the soul, blot it out? It cannot be.

There is the reason ethical. As inevitably as the eye demands the light or the stomach food, so inevitably does the ethical instinct in us demand a world where the balances of justice swing even.

If anything is evident in this world, it is evident that in this world the balances of justice do not swing even. I think this almost the most terrific, and at the same time ethically great, poem I ever came on. It is by Stopford A. Brooke :

Three men went out one summer night,  
No care had they or aim,  
And dined and drank. Ere we go home,  
We'll have, they said, a game.

Three girls began that summer night  
A life of endless shame,  
And went through drink, disease, and death  
As swift as racing flame.

Lawless and homeless, foul, they died ;  
Rich, loved, and praised, the men ;  
But when they all shall meet with God,  
And Justice speaks—what then ?

And the conscience in us demands, and will not cease demanding, though death do hide them, that somehow, somewhere, they shall all meet with God and that Justice shall speak.

But as the sun relieves us of the need of stars, how does the resurrection of our Lord

relieve us from any need of further argumentation toward the immortality of the soul ! Said that great and patient student of history, Dr. Arnold, of Rugby, and also professor of history at Oxford University :

“I have been used for many years to study the history of other times, to examine and weigh the evidences of those who have written about them, and I know of no one fact in the history of mankind which is proved by better and fuller evidence of every sort, to the mind of a fair inquirer, than that Christ died and *rose again from the dead.*”

And the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the historic certainty that beyond death there is another life, that death is not wall, rather only door.

## XXXIV

### CHRIST WITH US

“And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.”

**I**N this sentence from John's Gospel, we come upon the majestic verity of the incarnation. If we would know the antecedent dignity and being of the Word, we find them abundantly and luminously stated in the earlier verses of this first chapter.

This Gospel opens with the sublime announcement, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." In the beginning was the Word—that is before the beginning, at the moment of the beginning, when the fiat of creation sounded forth, and the vacant spaces began to be peopled with suns and stars and systems, and all the thronging processions of various life. Then the Word was; was before that beginning; himself in life before the faintest traces of any other life commenced to take dim shape at the behest of the creative voice. The Word was pre-existent. The Word was with God—that is, with the Father, and in some sense distinct from him. That preposition "with" involves these two ideas—that the Word had a conscious existence distinct from the Father, and that he also in this existence was associated with the Father in mutual fellowship.

But, lest by any means we should be led to ascribe to this "Word" a kind of existence lower than the Divine, there immediately follows this other statement, And the Word was God. It is impossible that any other meaning be wrested from this mighty utterance—mighty in its simplicity. In the same sense exactly in which God the Father is divine, in

that same sense exactly is the Word, the Son, divine.

And then the evangelist goes on immediately to ascribe the attributes of Deity to this Word. He tells us that the Word was the Creator. All things were made by him ; and without him was not anything made that was made. Or, to throw a little more of the sounding emphasis of the original into our translation, without him was not one thing made that hath been made. The Father created, but he created through Christ—just as the Father saves, but saves through Christ. Christ is Creator as well as Saviour. We have shorn him too much of his divine dignity by forgetting that his voice was the creative voice. Christ kindled the sun. Christ swung the stars into their orbits. Christ started the living pulses of your soul and mine. All things were made by him. Creation is a divine act. It was Christ's divine hand that was active in the creation. In him was life—he was the fontal principle of life in all the living.

Then John goes on to tell us that this pre-existent, creating, life-giving, divine Word was *made flesh*. That Word “flesh” stands broadly in Scripture for our human nature. That the Word was made flesh, means that the Word became man. The divine Word who



was one with God, as God, became one with us, as man. The divine nature was married to our human nature. There, in that manger in Bethlehem, there, in that Babe wailing in a maiden's arms, was the incarnation consummated. Through the door of birth the divine Word entered into our human life. He became thus as thoroughly man as he had been thoroughly God. Just as he had been personally conscious of all that is divine, so now, being made flesh, he becomes personally conscious of all that is human. Just as his divinity is real divinity, so now is his humanity a real humanness. As he was and is the God of every man, so now just as deeply is he the brother of every man. The deity which is over man stoops to brotherhood with man in the incarnation—and the Word was made flesh.

But let us consider another term of this great statement—and *dwelt among us*. The word "dwelt" signifies strictly, "tabernacled," or pitched his tent among us. The word is not used in the sense of a brief sojourning, but rather in that of a permanent stay. So in the Revelation John says that he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among his people. And then again he says, "Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell

with them," remain dwelling, staying permanently among them. And in this sense I think the word "dwelt" is to be taken here. Christ pitched his tent among men, and he keeps it pitched among them. Christ dwelt in human nature in the sense of a permanent stay in human nature. I am sure we are very apt to mistake here, and dim the wonderful brightness of that divine sacrifice for us, by misconception.

Have you never found yourself thinking something like this? After all, was that sacrifice so abysmal? A thousand years were but as one day with him. Thirty-three years of toil and trouble and endurance—what were these to him just dipping down from glory, becoming for a moment shadowed with this earthly state, and then rising into glory? What was that but as the merest inch of time compared with the eternity of glory before and the eternity of glory after? But I am sure that we have not enough remembered the fact that when Christ became one with man he came to dwell with man. When he humbled himself to become formed in fashion as a man, he humbled himself to remain in fashion as a man. He did not just descend into human nature to stay in it for thirty-three years. He entered into human nature to wear it forever.

The condescension was an eternal condescension. John saw him in the Revelation—the central sun of the heavenly glories—but as a Lamb that had been *slain*, with the marks of the sacrifice still upon him.

To be sure he has risen into glory, but it is into the glory of a glorified humanity. The human nature which he took upon himself at the incarnation he has never laid aside, nor will he ever put it off. Christ is as much human at the right hand of the throne to-day as when the heat smote him in Samaria, or sleep fell upon him at the sea of Galilee, or the spear cut his heart in twain on Calvary. He did not yield himself to the human condition for a moment—then casting it away, and trampling it beneath him. He yielded himself to the human condition forever, and bore our human nature with him far above all principality and power and might and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. The glory which he won through sacrifice, he won for humanity. The glory which he wears, he wears as man—as deeply and thoroughly as his glory is worn as God. His condescension was not anything temporary ; it was something eternal.

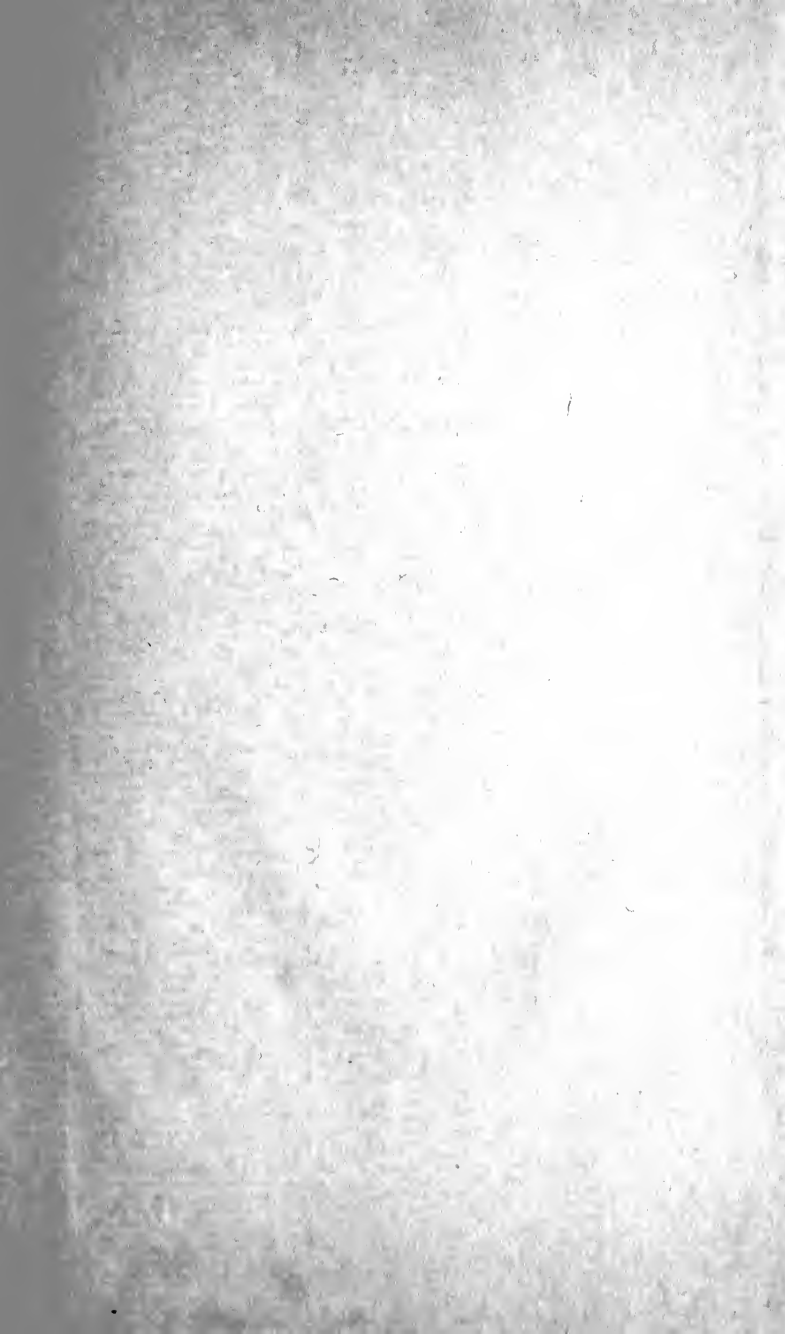
In a certain sense Christ is in continual

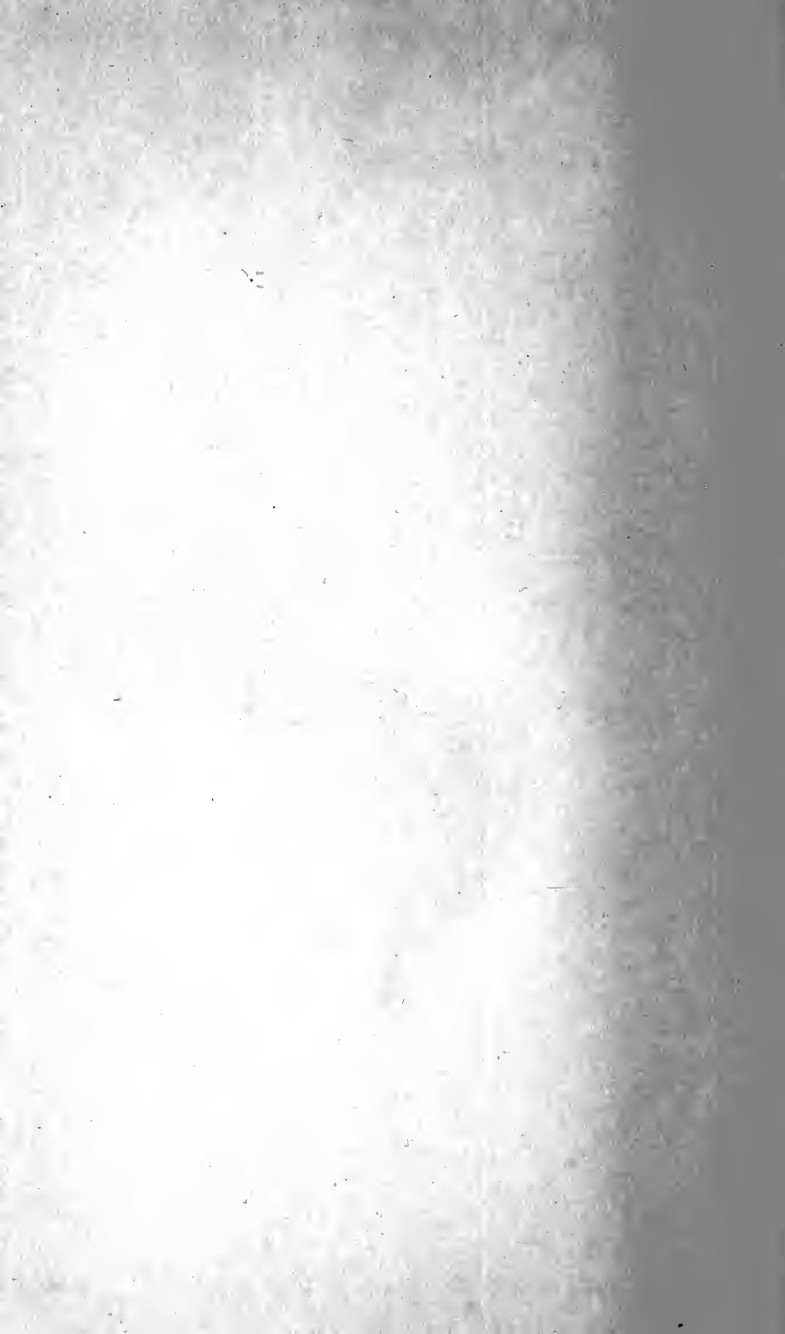
sacrifice—for he, Deity, remains in that which is less than Deity—humanity. He dwelt among us. So then we have not an High Priest who cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmity.



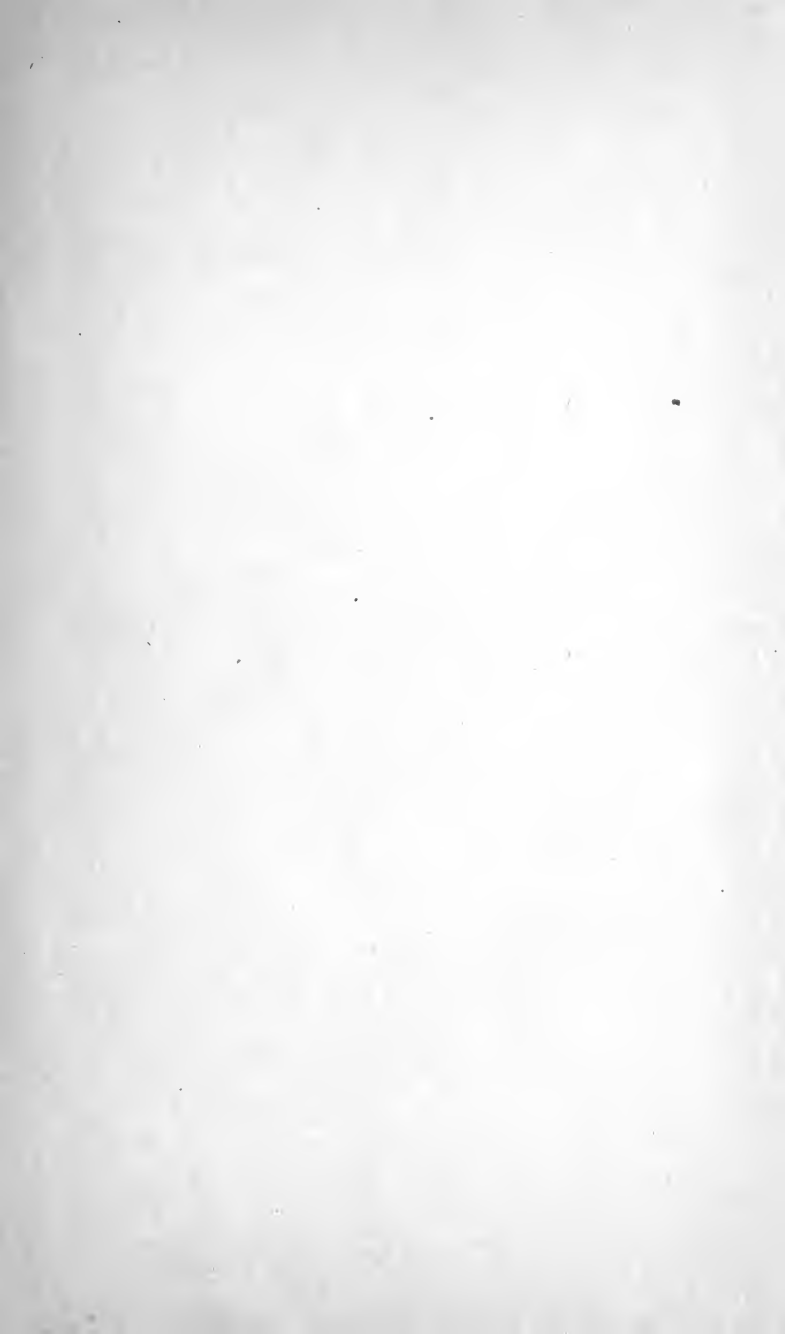












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